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*The New Statesman and Nation, October 27, 1934*

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STALIN AND WELLS

THE NEW

# STATESMAN AND NATION

## The Week-end Review

**Vol. VIII. No. 192 (New Series) SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1934** [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] **SIXPENCE**

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE air-race to Australia has proved a really thrilling affair. It has been won by English airmen after a terrific test of skill and endurance. The runner-up was the huge Dutch air-liner carrying passengers and mail. The Dutch recently failed to obtain a contract for carrying air-mails to Australia, and yet they have succeeded in carrying them there in three days. The result is bound to be a demand for an improved air-mail service everywhere. Imperial Airways has been telling us recently how air development is everywhere retarded by the absurdities of nationalism. It seems impossible that this ludicrous claim to national sovereignty over little stretches of air should survive when aeroplanes can hop over a whole country in half an hour. The race enforces the great lesson of this age—that we have at our disposal technique for an international air service and a world air police, and that we are wantonly throwing away our chances and running into the vast destructiveness of war, because our minds remain fettered by the jealousies and trivialities of the past.

### The Air Race

On the technical side, the conditions for the race were admirable, since they excluded machines overloaded with petrol such as have caused many disasters in the past, and the race itself has revealed the rapid development in the design of fast machines. Until recently the speed of land aeroplanes was limited by the speed at which it was safe to land and the length of run necessary for take-off. The use of retractable undercarriages, adopted on most of the competing types, lessens the air resistance and increases the top speed without increasing the landing speed. An efficient propeller requires to be set at a different pitch when it is travelling slowly, on the take-off, and when it is travelling forward at two or three hundred miles an hour. Variable pitch propellers were a feature of the Comets. Flaps on the trailing edges of the planes, which can be turned up at right angles, allow of a steep gliding angle and slower landing, and when combined with wheel brakes allow a fast machine to land in a small aerodrome. These too were a feature of the Comets. New developments of variable superchargers are also to be expected before long, and the arrival of passenger machines flying at great heights faster than Scott or Parmentier is not far off.

### North Lambeth and the Municipal Elections

The North Lambeth election result is a damaging blow to the Government's prestige, and still more to such hopes of survival as the "National Labour" group may entertain. Comic relief was provided by an Independent Conservative candidate who lost her deposit on a straight

fight for " God, King and Country." It is also satisfactory to the Labour Party to return their man by a majority of 6,300 over the Liberal and no less than 8,300 over the Government candidate. But it must not be forgotten that the poll was small, and that Mr. Strauss did not greatly improve on his 1929 vote, though he added nearly 2,500 to his poll of 1931. Once again, while a large part of the electorate did not trouble to vote, Labour's supporters came up to scratch much better than their opponents. In this respect North Lambeth may well be a forecast of the coming local elections in the London boroughs. In these, a small poll seems likely, with large Labour gains which may again bring a substantial number of local councils under Labour control. That will help Mr. Morrison; for the Labour L.C.C. can carry out its policy in such matters as housing a good deal more easily when it has the metropolitan borough councils on its side.

### The Old Gang in Jugoslavia

Fears of serious international complications resulting from King Alexander's murder have happily abated. But so too, unhappily, have the hopes which many cherished of a change in domestic policy in Jugoslavia. M. Ouzounovitch's new Cabinet is the old gang, all Serbs and all of the official party, except General Zhivkovitch, the Commander of the Royal Guard, who now becomes Minister of War, and who will be no more tender than his colleagues to the opposition parties. There seemed an excellent chance a week or two ago of a reconciliation; the Croat and Slovene and Moslem leaders had shown a remarkably friendly temper. But they have been cold-shouldered, and even, as they feel, insulted by M. Ouzounovitch. The belief persists in some quarters that this is a " transition Government," which will presently be succeeded by one more broad-based, aiming at a real instead of an artificial national unity. But it is difficult to discover any substantial ground for that belief. M. Ouzounovitch declares roundly that the old parties are done with and must abandon for ever their old divisions. If that means, as it presumably does, that they must also abandon their legitimate aspirations for the peoples they represent, then the outlook is ominous. The attempt to suppress the minorities will mean perpetual trouble in Jugoslavia—and beyond Jugoslavia.

### The Situation in Spain

With the victory of the Government forces in Asturias the Spanish revolt is now at an end. It was in that province, and particularly round its capital Oviedo and its parts of Gijon and Avilés, that the insurgents were most formidable and the slaughter and damage most heavy. Reports have spread abroad of savage atrocities perpetrated during the " Red Terror " that lasted for something like a fortnight. Probably, as in all such cases, there is some truth and a great deal of exaggeration in these. The net results of the whole rising have been the complete defeat (which may be followed by the formal proscription) of the parties of the Left, and an immense stimulus to the cause of reaction. It is not a triumph for Fascism, properly so-called; Señor Gil Robles, the effective master of the situation, is not a Fascist. He is a conservative and a Catholic who, while restoring clericalism, will, we may expect, preserve democratic—and for the present, at least, republican—forms. But it will be a very different democracy from that which started so hopefully on its great adventure three years ago. As yet we have no definite knowledge of what the Government's social and economic policy is to be. Indeed, the censorship allows us but the barest information about anything beyond the most ordinary events in Spain. Even the messages of the *Times* correspondent in Madrid, sympathetic as he is to the Government, are severely censored.

### The Gold Bloc

The countries of the gold bloc have followed up their recent pronouncement of solidarity by a further declaration. They intend, they say, to take steps to increase by ten per cent. the value of their mutual trade. It is natural enough, in face of their serious loss of exports to the rest of the world, that they should desire to do that; but it will not be easy for them in practice to bring about even this modest increase. To a great extent, their products are competitive and not complementary. France can doubtless buy more Italian wines, and the gold countries as a whole can buy more tropical products of the French and Dutch Empires. But assuredly nothing they can do to expand their mutual trading will come near offsetting the disadvantage at which the high external value of their currencies places them in dealing with the rest of the world. They will do what they can for one another, in face of their common reluctance to face the mistrust and internal hostility which any sort of depreciation or devaluation would involve. But their best cannot be a good best, or do more than slightly ease the situation. They are still in danger of being simply driven off gold; and probably they themselves hardly hope for more than a change in policy in the United States that will allow them to perform a single and limited act of devaluation rather than an uncertain act of depreciation. The latter would probably pull down any Government that authorised it; the former, given the necessary conditions in the United States, might be accomplished without political disaster.

### Mr. Roosevelt and the Banks

Mr. Roosevelt has gone among the bankers, many of whom are thirsting for his blood. But so many of the American public are still athirst for the bankers' blood that the American Bankers' Association has to be very careful not too outspokenly to attack the New Deal. Moreover, no one yet knows what permanent legislation for the reorganisation of banking the President proposes to introduce; and the bankers as a whole would far sooner come to terms with him than have to fight. Their object is to persuade him that the need for the time being is to concentrate on " recovery " rather than " reform," and that any attempt to reform the banking system is certain to lead to so much temporary dislocation as greatly to retard the recovery of business. It looks as if the President is more ready to be persuaded of this than he was a few months ago; for having tried a host of expedients he is clearly becoming alarmed at the smallness of the results in relation to the size of the problem, and at the prospect of having to pour out public money indefinitely in order to prevent an actual recession of business and employment. Some banking reform there must be; but the larger projects of 1933 seem to have receded into the background. It is not easy to combine an insistence

that banks shall provide him their credits for expansion with an equal insistence that they shall be soundly and cautiously run. Mr. Roosevelt, as he comes more closely up against the problem, seems to be realising that he cannot have it both ways.

### Birmingham's Black Spots

Birmingham's big hospital scheme was inaugurated by the Prince of Wales on Tuesday. It is an ambitious and a promising scheme, and, as the Prince said, "it is up to the citizens of Birmingham to see it through." It is also up to them to see another scheme through, which will help to diminish the need for hospitals. Birmingham is still far off the solution of its housing problem—how far is shown by a report just published of a Survey by a group of citizens (*Birmingham's Black Spots*, price 6*d*., from L. S. Florence, Highfield, Selly Park Road, Birmingham). In the seven central wards covered by this survey, 19,000 houses, or 41.6 per cent., were found to be below a decent standard of habitation in point of disrepair, insanitariness or overcrowding. Nor, of course, is the mischief confined to these wards. A conservative estimate for the whole city puts the total of houses "below standard" at 38,000, of which 28,000 are "utterly unfit." And to these must be added about 18,000 back-to-backs which, though classed as "habitable," are unsatisfactory and ought to be done away with as soon as possible, and another 10,000 houses in need of immediate and thorough repair.

### Private Police Now

It is a surprising and rather disturbing comment on the extent to which public vigilance has become apathetic that so little concern should have been aroused by the revelation of plans for the formation of a private police force for London. The proposal has gone as far as the registration of a company with a capital of £100,000, for the financing of a corps of uniformed watchmen to guard the property of Londoners who are willing to pay for the privilege. London, it is said, offers particularly good ground for such a scheme, the regular police being so preoccupied with traffic duties (why not, then, some more traffic police?) and experts are apparently to be engaged from the Continent to set the thing going on the most approved model. Among those prominently connected with the scheme are Sir Edward Shortt, film censor and one-time Home Secretary, and it is said that the promoters have received benevolent assurances from the Home Office and Scotland Yard—an astonishing fact, if it is true. Here is another private army in the making, with nothing so far as can be seen to prevent its being captured—by the simple method of undisclosed recruitment into its ranks—by the Mosley Fascists or any other shirted body. The political risks are big enough, but the social ones bid fair to outweigh them. The opportunities for graft and blackmail which such a force would afford might be truly prodigious. London has spent several years cleaning up its public police force and would need very complete assurances that it was not being saddled with new facilities for corruption, created in the interests of private gain. Perhaps the most anti-social aspect of the scheme is the implied protection it would afford to the lawbreaker. "If you don't subscribe to our police, your house will be burgled with impunity."

### Stalin and H. G. Wells

Extracts from the recent conversation in Moscow between Stalin and H. G. Wells have already appeared in the press, but we believe that readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will be interested to read the full authorised version—authorised, that is, by both parties to the conversation. We, therefore, publish it *in extenso* as a Supplement to this week's issue. After dealing with the central problems of the transition of Capitalism into Socialism and the part to be played in this transition by the working class and the bourgeoisie, the discussion touches on the subject of intellectual liberty. One of the objects of Mr. Wells's visit to Russia was to appeal to Soviet writers to co-operate with their Western colleagues in the activities of the P.E.N. Club. In a note printed in this Supplement, Mr. Wells complains that the letter which he handed to Gorki, as President of the Soviet Writers' Congress, received no answer. Mr. Wells's appeal comes at an opportune moment. Amongst a number of evidences of the increasing demand for liberty in Soviet Russia, one of the most striking was the outspoken and independent attitude adopted by several of the young authors at this year's Soviet Writers' Congress. There seems some reason to hope that the Soviet Government, which has now decided to co-operate politically with the Western Powers at Geneva, will also realise the advantages of intellectual freedom and of encouraging co-operation with Western thinkers.

The issues raised by this Supplement are thus of quite unusual interest. Next week we hope to publish several comments upon it. Amongst those whose comments may be expected are MR. BERNARD SHAW and MR. J. M. KEYNES.

### The Sedition Bill Explained

The case against the Sedition Bill could not, we believe, be stated more moderately, lucidly or persuasively than it is in the pamphlet by Mr. Ivor Jennings published by the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION this week. Quotations from Mr. J. B. Priestley's forcible Preface are given in an announcement on page 603 of this issue. As a lawyer, Mr. Jennings explains the dangers of the Bill with learning and precision, but in language that everyone can understand. We do not believe that anyone who minds about liberty and the traditions of British justice, whatever his political affiliations, can read this pamphlet without agreeing that the Bill provides the Executive with a weapon which can be used for the complete suppression of pacifist opinion. Mr. Jennings shows how it will affect not only the pacifist propagandist, but also all writers, publishers and printers. The fact that the present Government denies any desire or intention of using the wide powers of search and punishment against reputable writers and publishers is irrelevant. We may yet have worse Governments in power than the present, and the British Courts take account only of the law, not of the intentions of the legislators. There is reason to think that the Government regrets this Bill; they will gain prestige by dropping it, not by forcing it through in spite of a wide popular protest, supported by eminent persons of every party.

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# ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM

> I can say that practically every thinking Briton is in favour of a revival of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Not with a secret agreement to attack any third party, but for open and friendly mutual assistance. . . . Of course, the only difficulty lying in the way is trade competition. In this respect I wish to meet leading industrialists of Osaka and frankly exchange views with them. If further favour is shown by the Japanese towards British co-operation in Manchukuo, the British might reciprocate by showing favour in Empire trade. Business is based on the principle of give and take, you know.—*Sir Charles Seligmann, member of the F.B.I. mission, in an interview with the "Osaka Mainichi."*

Whether the exuberant welcome given to the F.B.I. mission on its arrival in Japan is responsible for Sir Charles Seligmann's remarkably frank statement, we do not know. In any case we are grateful for a clear statement of the ideas that lie behind this mission. The British public is told from the start that the mission is not, as it has been presented, a mere commercial affair, but a political movement of the first importance—a movement which, when understood in the background of Japan's recent adventures in Manchuria, the Naval Conference and the still imminent danger of a Japanese attack on the U.S.S.R., may mean nothing more nor less than that Great Britain is repudiating the League of Nations and directly encouraging the Japanese to make war in the Far East.

Japan still stands arraigned by the Governments of all the nations at Geneva as an aggressor and a treaty-breaker. The only intelligible excuse ever put forward for not applying the sanctions of the Covenant against her were that the League Powers were too weak to apply them. Actually, it was clear that the reason was quite a different one. Sir John Simon and his friends did not want to stop Japan. The Lytton report demonstrated that the driving force behind Japan's aggression was an unholy alliance between the army and big business, and that her immediate objects were, first, to make Manchuria a strategic wedge dividing the U.S.S.R. from China; secondly, to use Manchuria as a source of war materials; and thirdly, to create a closed market for Japanese goods. Japan's feverish building of strategic roads, railways and aerodromes in Manchuria, her developing aggressiveness in Inner Mongolia and Northern China south of the Great Wall, as well as on the Chinese Eastern Railway, her vast war preparations and war propaganda, all make it clear that Manchuria is regarded merely as Japan's base for vaster aggressions, and that any help in "developing" Manchuria under Japanese occupation means helping Japan to get ready for a great war. Japanese capitalism is rushing toward war as the only way to survive. As Baron Seinosuké Go, president of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and of the Japanese Economic League, puts it in a recent article:

> There are two ways of getting the better of over-production in Japan. One is to conquer foreign markets. The other is to turn producers into consumers. But the second way is impracticable. The only remaining way, therefore, is territorial expansion. The Manchurian question is important in this connection. . . . The best way of defeating increasingly acute competition is to make oneself safe by acquiring markets and territory of one's own. It is in this that the danger of war lies.

Western capitalism from the outset refused to strive officiously to keep peace alive. It was the pressure of the banks, the City and the F.B.I. that kept the National Government from attempting or even contemplating sanctions against Japan. These vested interests cared only for their investments in and trade with Japan and for the losses that might ensue from the collapse of the yen (which could easily have been brought about and would have stopped Japan's adventure). They were cynically indifferent to the tearing up of the Covenant, the collapse of disarmament, the shattering of the League and the evil of war itself in Manchuria. They seemed not to mind that the foundations of a great war were being laid in the Far East. They actually declared that Japan stood for "law and order" in the Far East, by which they meant that Japan would make Manchuria, and eventually the rest of China, safe for foreign profits, and would then proceed to give them a share of the swag. The touching faith of the City in foreign aggression and violence as a means of ensuring order has survived the discovery by Eastern nations of nationalism, Communism and boycotts.

These financial and business interests are surprisingly simple-minded if they think that this country's trade will benefit by a Japanese alliance. Japan's motive in seeking a renewal of alliance is not to benefit the trade of other people. They want their hands free for war against the U.S.S.R. and eventually the U.S.A. Their intentions were expressed with delightful clarity in an article by Mr. Hirata Shinsaku, a well-known military writer, quoted in the *Japan Chronicle* of February 4th, 1933. After commenting upon Great Britain's unpopularity in Japan, Mr. Shinsaku writes:

> I agree . . . that Britain has been the greatest aggressor of any in history. I am against her tyranny in India. . . . But as an alliance with Britain was absolutely essential for Japan's tactical purposes against Russia about 1900, so the situation in the Far East now, in 1933, demands the formation of a new military alliance between Japan and Britain. Japan has now four hypothetical enemies—the Soviet Red Army and the Chinese force for the army, and the American and British fleets for the navy. Some extremists here are of the opinion that Japan is fated to fight the Soviet and Chinese forces on the north-western front, and the combined American and British fleets in south-eastern waters. But this is a dangerous idea. . . . It is not merely the Soviet army that is undervalued by some Japanese extremists. The same is done with the American navy. What if these two great enemies should take action against Japan simultaneously? War is a serious matter. When Japan is face to face with the Soviet army or the navy of the United States she will really know that it will mean a very hard fight . . . The fight will be all the harder should Britain join the war against Japan. Have we sufficient force, supplies, and so on, to face the three great enemies simultaneously? No doubt some valiant young officers will say yes. But I doubt whether there will be any staff officer who will not turn deadly pale at the idea. In this light the technical prestige of Britain in the Far East has enhanced compared with the days of the Russo-Japanese war. It is said that Britain has grown weaker. Certainly her naval power has grown weaker. But the fact remains that the casting vote in Far Eastern warfare is still in her hands. . . .
>
> When one reflects on the difficulties attendant on the possible campaign against the Red and the American force, one cannot help yearning from the bottom of one's heart for a military alliance with Britain. Perhaps Britain may be the ultimate enemy of us Orientals, as some of my friends think, but Japan is fated to have Britain for a comrade in arms if she is to push on her work of building up a continental State.

These quotations, which are typical of Japanese military thought—that is, of the thought of the present masters of Japan—show that the Japanese occupation of Manchuria was from the first regarded as merely the first step toward a big war for "the lordship of the East" by subjugating China and fighting Russia and, if necessary, the U.S.A. It also shows that this war could be nipped in the bud even now if Japan knew that any fresh aggression against China or the U.S.S.R. would mean joint action by all the Great Powers. And the casting vote for peace or war remains, as Mr. Shinsaku says, in the hands of Great Britain.

It is against this background that the despatch of the F.B.I. Mission and the accompanying ballyhoo in the Government press must be seen. The *Times* published a series of articles on Manchukuo which were straight

Japanese propaganda. The *Daily Telelgraph* published a special supplement on "Japan and Manchukuo" full of the usual apologia for Covenant-breaking, and talk of friendship and co-operation between Great Britain, who is supposed to be a loyal member of the League, and Japan, whom she has joined with the rest of the League to condemn as an aggressor and war-maker. All the Government papers published editorials in similar vein. The matter was made plain in a remarkable leader in the *Financial News* of August 29th, entitled "Britain Discovers Manchukuo," which said that, while officially the F.B.I. Mission was sent to pay a courtesy visit and to study trade conditions in Manchukuo,

> not wholly irresponsible opinion suggests that the Mission is blessed by the Government, that it is the Government's typically British first step downwards to reality where formal recognition of Manchukuo lies, and that such recognition may eventually lead to a resumption of something approaching the close relations which existed between Japan and Great Britain before 1921.

What is the inference from all this? Has the Government made up its several minds to renew the old alliance with Japan? Can it have done so just at the moment when the U.S.S.R. has been welcomed into the League and a new opportunity been created for making the League a reality and for forestalling the danger of war in the Far East? It is at least difficult to doubt that the Government is acting as the servant of the F.B.I., difficult to believe that Sir Charles Seligmann spoke without some assurance of support in the Cabinet. The Foreign Office has explained to the press that the F.B.I. mission, although quite unofficial, was not disapproved of by the Government, and not considered incompatible with our League obligation not to recognise Manchukuo. A broad hint was even dropped that one result of the mission might be the floating of loans in London for "developments" in Manchukuo. We are at least entitled to a Government statement of its Far Eastern and League policy. We are, as things stand, driven to the conclusion that the British Government, while not daring frankly to follow Japan and Germany in leaving the League, is privately arranging to co-operate with these States in sabotaging it and to abet Japan in her aggression. The British Government has the choice of peace or war. Japan, as we have seen, is unlikely to run the risk of war without the assurance of a friendly Great Britain. If Great Britain repudiates the League and supports Japan, war is probable and the National Government will bear a large measure of responsibility for it.

## THE PUBLIC TRUSTEE: A STUDY IN SOCIALISATION

PEOPLE who are interested in current proposals for the socialisation of industry and banking should undoubtedly spend more time than they do at present in studying the activities of Government departments. Those who are most vociferous about future possibilities are often the most ignorant concerning present achievements. Among the flora and fauna in the world of public administration there are few specimens more generally overlooked, or more likely to repay attention, than the office of the Public Trustee.

The office was established by the Public Trustee Act, 1906, which came into force at the beginning of 1908. A Bill for the purpose had been introduced by a Conservative Government as far back as 1890, but it was dropped owing to violent opposition on the part of the legal profession and other sectional interests. A Select Committee of the House of Commons reported in 1895 that the malversation or neglect of funds by private trustees was a serious evil causing much suffering and distress. A series of sensational defalcations served to focus public attention on the subject and drive home the need for action. Eventually Campbell-Bannerman's administration succeeded in pushing a measure through Parliament.

Thus came the State to enter a field of activity which for centuries had been the exclusive domain not so much of private enterprise as of personal interest arising from family connection and the ties of friendship. The system of trusts, wills and settlements has been for hundreds of years the stronghold of the well-to-do classes in England, in which wealth and power were entrenched in a well-nigh impregnable fortress. It was the gathering ground in which the mighty forces of blood relationship, family pride, the possessive instinct, parental solicitude, malicious spite, the bond of friendship, and class dominance met together in a vast array to protect the rights of property. All conflicting aims were subordinated to the supreme task of handing on the estate from generation to generation. The Forsyte dynasty was based essentially on this system of trusts, wills and settlements.

The Public Trustee is, then, unlike most government departments, dealing with the classes rather than with the masses. He is entrusted with functions of the most variegated and highly individualised kind which cannot be administered *en masse* in simple, well-defined categories. He is providing neither a necessity nor a public utility, but an optional service to be paid for by those who accept it. He is in competition, on the one hand, with voluntary trustees and executors, and on the other, with the great joint stock banks, all of which have established special departments for the purpose.

It must not be supposed that the Public Trustee is endowed with unusual powers or privileges not available to unofficial bodies. On the contrary, Parliament was careful to place him in exactly the same legal position as a private trustee. There are only two exceptions made from the ordinary law of trusts. One is that the Consolidated Fund is liable to repay sums for which the Public Trustee would be personally liable if he were a private trustee. This public responsibility for breaches of trust is, however, of only nominal importance. The other is that the Public Trustee has a statutory power of charging fees, in order to avoid expense falling on the taxpayer. The office aims at being self-supporting and no more.

The Public Trustee has achieved an astonishing success, judged by the volume of business which he has captured. The history of the office has been one of rapid and continuous growth. From a small concern looking after less than five hundred cases valued at about £3,500,000 in 1909 it has become a large organisation employing more than 800 officials and responsible for about 18,500 wills or trusts, the capital value of which amounts to no less than £265 millions, of which about £50 millions consists of landed property. To these must be added the 12,600 cases, valued at about £150 millions, which have been completely disposed of. Thus the Public Trustee has been entrusted in the past twenty-five years with a total of 31,182 wills and settlements involving property amounting to more than £400 millions. The office is now distributing an income of about £10 millions a year to approximately 200,000 beneficiaries. Those who assert that civil servants are incapable of dealing competently and prudently with the investment of private funds will have to take these figures into account, for they demonstrate that a substantial fraction of the capital resources of the nation has been voluntarily placed by its owners in the safe keeping of the State.

It requires a considerable effort of the imagination to visualise the multifarious aspects of life which are touched upon in the course of administering this vast mass of wills and trusts. Almost every phase of human existence, economic and domestic, educational and professional, comes before the office at some time or other. The Public Trustee is in the course of his duties called upon to consent to the marriage of young women,

to decide upon the method of educating children, to choose a particular school or university, to approve a career, to straighten out troublesome situations arising in connection with illegitimate children. The archives of the office could disclose a thousand difficult questions which the Public Trustee has been called upon to decide. A family in Italy wants to be moved to Kenya. Should it be allowed to go? £100,000 is needed to save an old family business; can the family trust provide the money or should the business be wound up? A boy is accused of murdering his mother. Should capital funds be advanced in breach of trust to finance his defence? What is to be done with a woman drug addict who has escaped from the home in which the Public Trustee placed her? A man of high social position has fallen heavily into debt. Is he to be "rescued"? A young man wants to put some money into a farm in Australia. Is it really a sensible thing to do? These are the kinds of questions which the office is constantly called upon to deal with in its capacity of financial watchdog over the family fortunes. The Public Trustee is not often made a guardian, but he is nearly always a guide, philosopher and friend. An error of judgment may plunge a group of persons into distress or misery.

It is obvious that wisdom as well as technical ability is called for in the exercise of discretionary functions such as these. It is here that both the organisation of the office and the calibre of the personnel undergo the most searching test. And it is precisely at this point that they make a good showing. The Public Trustee's office is singularly devoid of the rigid bureaucratic outlook which is alleged to characterise all government departments. Actually, the reverse is the case. The Public Trustee is accustomed to take infinite pains in small matters on which it would be quite impossible to spend time were the profit-making motive in operation. Many small trusts are, in fact run at a loss. The office is so organised that particular clients or beneficiaries deal always with the same officer.

There is an enormous margin between dealing peremptorily or cursorily with a case and giving it the careful and perhaps prolonged attention which it may need. This makes comparison between the fees charged by the State and those asked by the banks by no means a "simple matter of arithmetic." The charges made by the banks vary considerably, but all follow the practice of the Public Trustee in having an acceptance fee, a withdrawal fee, an income fee and a management or investment fee. Speaking broadly, the acceptance and withdrawal fees asked by the banks are lower than those of the Public Trustee. But one knows the banks are not in the business for the sake of their health, and the whole spirit of the English law of trusts is opposed to the profit-making motive.

"Trusteeship," a judge once said, "is an act of chivalry." The days of chivalry have passed, in this as in most other spheres; but it would seem as though the appropriate succession should be to the disinterested administration of a public department rather than to profit-making enterprise. That, indeed, appears to be the opinion of the public, for though no figures seem to be available, the banks can have secured only a small amount of business compared with the volume handled by the Public Trustee.

In the administration of wills and settlements the crux of the matter lies, of course, in the financial and economic policy pursued by those in charge of the property. The responsibilities of executors and trustees are to-day far greater than they were in the days when their investments were confined to a more or less watertight list of trustee securities. Furthermore, the unparalleled economic instability of the post-war world, with its catastrophic repercussions on currency and securities in every country, have immensely increased the problems and difficulties of trustees. I do not profess to be able to give an expert critique of the investment policy pursued by the Public Trustee in respect of the very large capital sums over which he has power of disposal. But I am satisfied that the responsible officers are intelligent people who are awake to the major aspects of the economic situation which may be expected to influence investment policy. That is all one has any right to expect, and much more than one often gets from pundits in the City.

The Public Trustee is in any case assisted by an honorary Investment Advisory Committee, which leavens official administration with a City element. Of greater importance is the independence of Treasury control on which the Public Trustee rightly insists. "Our office," he says, "is in no sense an ante-chamber of the Treasury and our discretion in matters of investment is exercised solely with regard to the interests of the individual trust." Nor does he display any marked preference for British Government securities.

The Public Trustee reports annually to the Lord Chancellor, who appoints him and his officers. The Lord Chancellor makes rules for the regulation of the work of the office, subject to the concurrence of the Treasury. The scale of fees is fixed by the Treasury with the sanction of the Lord Chancellor. Apart from these restricted and occasional controls, the Public Trustee's office may be regarded as an autonomous department enjoying the freedom and independence which are required for the successful conduct of its work.

It may safely be said, in conclusion, that the Public Trustee is one of the most successful experiments in progressive public administration which we have undertaken in this country. It represents the socialisation of a field of activity which is at once extremely individual in its application and complicated in its processes. The work calls for technical ability of a high order and great practical wisdom; and these have been forthcoming in ample measure from the able officials who man the office. The Public Trustee is dependent for his business on just the type of cautious property-owner who is usually an extreme Conservative in politics and most given to denouncing all State functions as being inevitably inefficient and hedged about with bureaucracy and red tape. The alleged impossibility of socialising financial and investment operations has not prevented a very large amount of property being placed in the keeping of the Public Trustee for purposes which are closely related to those in question.

One of the lessons which we should learn from this demonstration is the desirability of permitting the State to enter certain fields in competition with existing commercial organisations. There is far too much insistence on monopoly in regard to both central and local government services. There are some functions where optimum technical efficiency can only be obtained through exclusive control over the entire field, but in many instances there is no good reason why the merits of collective enterprise should not be demonstrated in competition with private business. If Socialists had more confidence in the doctrines they profess they would welcome the opportunity of showing that public enterprise can easily hold its own even under existing conditions.

WILLIAM A. ROBSON

# A LONDON DIARY

READING the second volume of Lord Snowden's *Autobiography* (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 21s.), my first feeling is relief that he has at last overcome the malice and hysteria that so distressed his friends and rejoiced his enemies in 1931. The new volume is full of interest; though Lord Snowden has not kept a personal diary, publishes no new documents and reveals no very terrific secrets, his memory is fresh and his account sufficiently indiscreet to be thoroughly good reading. It is often acid, but no longer petulant and vicious. We learn —as we should expect—that Lord Snowden was always of the school that believed that Socialist minority Governments should have co-operated with the Liberals and stuck to agreed reforms. I believe they would have been wiser on both occasions to begin by introducing a definitely Socialist measure which would have brought them credit and strength, whether their opponents decided to turn them out or to let the measure

through. But I agree with Lord Snowden that, when Mr. MacDonald had once chosen to play the game of going slow, the only sane policy was frank and full co-operation with the Liberals. As it was, Mr. MacDonald made the worst of both worlds and allowed his Governments to be destroyed on issues of his opponents' choosing.

* * *

It is amusing to learn that in forming the first Labour Government in 1924 Mr. MacDonald did not at first think of including Mr. Henderson at all, and then suggested making him Chairman of Ways and Means! In describing the formation of the Government of 1929 Lord Snowdon tells the story of how Mr. Thomas and Mr. Henderson both dug their feet in and demanded the Foreign Secretaryship. Another member of the Government once told me that Mr. Henderson won because he had more guts and held out longer than Mr. Thomas. Lord Snowden's account shows Mr. Henderson as the better strategist as well as the better man at a tug of war. The odd thing, as Lord Snowden remarks, is that Mr. Thomas ever accepted the office of "Minister of Unemployment." I take it that Mr. Thomas's worst weakness was a vanity that made him believe that his parliamentary adroitness would enable him to carry off any office, while Mr. Henderson's greatest strength lay in his knowledge that he had for the Foreign Secretaryship an able team ready and an agreed policy to carry through. As it turned out, Mr. Henderson was an outstanding success and Mr. Thomas a lachrymose failure.

* * *

Lord Snowden quotes Mr. Baldwin as saying, before the financial crisis, that he expected soon to be in the same Cabinet as Mr. MacDonald, and confirms the view that Mr. MacDonald had long been planning a National Government. He does not defend his leader's secrecy in not consulting his colleagues, and he refers to his obvious delight in getting rid of them and his remark, when he formed the National Government, that now "every Duchess in London would be wanting to kiss him!" He absurdly overstates what he regards as the treachery of the National Government in going in for a complete Protectionist policy, in spite of their election pledges. It must have been as obvious to him, as it was to almost everyone, that a great Tory majority meant Protection whatever the safeguards promised in the election. Lord Snowden is quite clear about the shortcomings of the National Government, as well as about those of the Labour Government it superseded. The only person about whom he is not altogether realistic is himself. Conscious of his own rectitude, of the stout stuff he is made of, of his great powers and services to the Labour movement—Labour has never had a better fighter since the days of Keir Hardie—it does not even occur to him to ask whether he did not himself share the responsibility for the failure of the Government of 1929-31, and whether the chief blame for the final collapse did not rest on his shoulders. After all, it was he who was Chancellor of the Exchequer, in constant touch with Mr. Montagu Norman (whom he praises in the highest terms in this book); he knew far more of the situation than his colleagues, and he consistently refused every possible solution for the financial crisis. I well remember during those months before the crisis how members of the Economic Council were driven desperate by the formula he employed to negative every proposal: "I can conceive of nothing more likely to be detrimental to the best interests of this country." He would not have a revenue tariff (which he tells us Mr. MacDonald rather favoured), he would not have an expansionist policy, he never dreamt of going off gold, or of using the crisis, when it came, for the application of those Socialist principles which he had advocated all his life. There is a sense, no doubt, in which he is justified in his reiterated accusations that his colleagues "ran away."; but he might surely have added that he had himself already shot down all their defences against the enemy's guns.

* * *

In each volume of his *War Memoirs* Mr. Lloyd George launches a new offensive against the generals and admirals. This week, while the outraged brass-hats are still smarting from his last volume and discussing plans for a counter-offensive, Mr. Lloyd George opens a new bombardment. I've not yet read the whole of his Volume IV, but I see that the attack is as vigorous as ever. Passchendaele gives Mr. Lloyd George a terribly effective opening. Take, for instance, his account of the generals' ghastly efforts, continued in spite of all experience, to advance over a sea of liquid mud:

> Some time later, the Tank Corps Staff prepared maps to show how a bombardment which obliterated the drainage would inevitably lead to a series of pools, and they located the exact spots where the waters would gather. The only reply vouchsafed to this effort to save the Army from disaster was a peremptory order that they were to "Send no more of these ridiculous maps." Maps must conform to plans and not plans to maps. Facts that interfered with plans were impertinences.

* * *

War cannot last for a week except on the basis of elaborate and deliberate deception. The enemy must be told one set of lies, the troops another, the Allies a third, the neutrals a fourth and the home population a fifth. So much we know, and an American sociologist, Professor Lasswell, has done a very useful piece of research work in describing in some detail how this technique of war lying was applied between 1914 and 1919. (I don't know whether Goebbels has read his books; he certainly applies his principles.) But Mr. Lloyd George adds a new and really devastating fact. The generals were even ready to deceive their own Prime Minister on vital issues. As one way of trying to persuade him in spite of all the evidence that they were advancing to a speedy and inevitable victory, they told him that the physique of the German troops then being captured showed that Germany had come to the end of her resources. Mr. Lloyd George said he would like to see these undersized and undernourished prisoners.

> I saw the last "cage," and I thought the men were a weedy lot. They were deplorably inferior to the manly samples I had seen in the earlier stages of the war. It was some years after the war that I ascertained on authority which is unimpeachable that on that occasion G.H.Q. rang up Fifth Army and stated that the Prime Minister was coming down and would go to Corps Headquarters to see German prisoners. Instructions were given to inform the Corps—I forget which one it was—of this, and to tell them to see that able-bodied prisoners were removed from the Corps cages.

* * *

I have had an interesting conversation with the lady almoner whose letter appears in this week's correspondence. She convinced me that almoners perform a most valuable work in assisting patients after their discharge from hospital, putting them into touch with the various organisations which could help them and taking care that incurable cases receive as far as possible the comforts which they require. The almoners receive a careful training, often in part at the London School of Economics, they study the circumstances of the individual patient, and act as liaison-officers between the innumerable bodies, public and private, which are working independently for a common end, the relief of distress. In hospitals where there is only one almoner, she is inevitably occupied chiefly with administrative work and the prevention of abuses, and a development in the demand of hospitals for trained almoners is most desirable; there are twenty in the hospital I visited, and I had evidence of the invaluable social work they perform. But almoners, however numerous, capable and devoted, can never take the place of an adequate Public Health Service in preventive work. It is doubtful even whether an enormous development of the out-patients departments (at present usually so overworked) could carry out adequately this function. But I hope soon to write about the Pioneer Health Centre, a voluntary organisation which is giving a lead to the public authorities by carrying out just this preventive work which is so essential to the health of the community, and for which at present there is very little provision.

* * *

The best comment I have seen on the working of restriction schemes comes from the United States. It is a letter written

by an American who apparently hopes to be a beneficiary of the N.R.A. I give it in full:

SIR,—A friend of mine in New England has a neighbour who has received a check for $1,000 this year for not raising hogs. So my friend now wants to go into the business himself, he not being very prosperous just now; he says, in fact, that the idea of not raising hogs appeals to him very strongly. Of course, he will need a hired man, and that is where I come in. I write to you as to your opinion of the best kind of farm not to raise hogs on, the best strain of hogs not to raise, and how best to keep an inventory of hogs you are not raising. Also do you think capital could be raised by issuance of a non-hog-raising gold bond?

The friend who got the thousand dollars got it for not raising 500 hogs. Now we figure we might easily not raise 1,500 or 2,000 hogs, so you see the possible profits are only limited by the number of hogs we do not raise. The other fellow had been raising hogs for 40 years and never made more than $400 in any one year. Kind of pathetic, isn't it, to think how he wasted his life raising hogs when he could have made so much more by not raising them! CRITIC.

## THIS ENGLAND

**Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Mr. R. C. Plaistowe.**

**All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

Everywhere you hear children asking for British-made toys. I go to the big stores occasionally and mingle with the crowds, and it is astonishing how many little mites say, "Mummy, is it English?" —*The Star.*

SIR,—I have just suffered my quarterly irritation at being asked to make my telephone cheque payable to "The Postmaster-General" instead of "H.M. Postmaster-General."

I believe the change occurred during the last Socialist Government's disastrous tenure of office. (Dr.) H. DOUGLAS SMART.

152 Harley Street, W.1.—Letter in *Morning Post.*

Oxford has, as ever, in the academic sphere the monopoly of the best brains, while in spheres other than academic its superiority is not even questioned.—*Isis.*

The designer of a new branded toilet paper realised that two problems faced him. First, the embarrassment of women shoppers when demanding "toilet paper," and secondly, that, being a bulky product, it is very seldom displayed. New display cartons overcame both problems. In lavender black and white, they are designed to hold six of the rolls and to enable the woman shopper to serve herself from the counter. A new name—bath-room tissues—receives prominence, as also does the alternative-use message—an ideal cold cream remover. The new angle on selling raised sales 50 per cent.—*Business.*

Does it pay to be a good girl?—*Evening News.*

Mr. W. W. Wakefield has published seven reasons why the people should vote for him and the National Government. The sixth of these reasons is: "He is a good sportsman, has often captained England and has the record number of 31 international Rugby caps to his credit."—*News-Chronicle.*

His attitude to life is simple. He judges all things and events as they affect fox-hunting. That is the only way in which things should be measured.—Major Guy Paget, in an Introduction to a hunting book.

On October 6th a letter from Lord Selborne appeared in your columns which clearly set forth the implications that would follow on the adoption of the Labour programme. It is all-important that the working classes should realise that under any such programme the individual working man loses his right to dispose of his labour on his own terms.—Letter from Lord Lamington, in the *Times.*

If a person passes making a beastly noise in a motor car, put your fingers to your ears and shout "swine"! This advice was given to a meeting of the Anti-Noise League. . . . —*Daily Sketch.*

"If Hamlet had had a bicycle the story would have been a very different one," remarked the Rev. F. Paton-Williams in his address to cyclists at the special Cyclists' Touring Club service at St. Ann's Church, Manchester, yesterday.—*Manchester Guardian.*

Mathew did not behave like a normal being in the police-station, but, remembering that he was a Guards officer, he (the doctor) thought it was an exaggeration of his normal habits.—*Daily Telegraph.*

I would give the "cat" to women criminals as well as men. . . . White slave traffic could not exist but for women.—Rev. Edgar Bull, reported in the *Daily Herald.*

I did not open my mile of glebe along the actual starting point as a rival front to the aerodrome in aid of the church roof cleaning. . . . Then, too, I was at Eton, and some of these men were there also. It would not have been playing the game.—The Vicar of Mildenhall in the *East Anglian Times.*

## POSSESSIVE

A CHARMING visitor looked in unexpectedly on Sunday afternoon while we were listening to the broadcast of a Byrd programme from Ely Cathedral. "Don't turn it off," she said as I bent down to twist the knob into silence; and then, after listening for a few moments, she added: "How good your reception is! I wish my set was as clear as that. It's simply perfect." I cannot deny that I was pleased to hear the compliment to my set, though I had been cursing its inefficiency for months and looking forward eagerly to the day when I should have the energy to get rid of it. It is a ramshackle portable set that even in its best days was nothing to boast of. To-day it will sometimes refuse to utter a sound till I have shaken it as an angry Victorian nurse would shake a rebellious child. Often only a severe kick on the open lid of the box will rouse it to a sense of duty. For months I tried methods of persuasion, but I was slowly and reluctantly driven to the conclusion that, with our wireless set at least, force was the only remedy. And, even after the most sadistic onslaughts, there is no certainty that the set will behave well for more than a few minutes. Cracklings, whistlings, vanishings into far-away faintness, and interferences from unwanted stations occur and continue till I have thumped the instrument back into reason. If our visitor had appeared twenty minutes sooner, she would have heard no cathedral music from Ely, but only the refractory protests of an ill-mannered box making taunting noises at its possessor.

And yet, as I have said, the compliment to the box somehow pleased me. I felt much as a mother must feel on hearing strangers praising her infant son whom she knows to be an imp of Satan when no strangers are present. She knows that the praise is undeserved; but so strong is the love of self-deception that she allows herself to glow for the time being with the fancy that she is the mother of an angel. After all, the boy is hers, and it is good to hear anything that is one's own praised. I confess I had always loved the wireless set possessively, however I may have been maddened by its unruly antics, and however a sense of duty may have compelled me to punish it. It played the fool almost from the day on which I bought it; but even then I felt a twinge of egotistic pain when strangers laughed derisively at its misbehaviour and told me how they themselves had got absolutely perfect sets for about half the money. The man who helped me to buy the set used to condole with me on possessing such an instrument, and always professed to be particularly ashamed because the cheaper set which he had bought for himself at the same time was next door to perfection. I had no wish for such sympathy. I maintained that in its good moments my set was the equal of any in the world, and in fact my attitude

could have been summed up in a sentence: "Who loves me loves my wireless set."

There are many people to-day who denounce the possessive instinct and who declare that, until human beings have got rid of the pleasure and pride of possession, we can never enter Utopia. I do not agree with them. I am sure that, even in a Communist Utopia, if it ever arrives, the pleasure of possessing things and of hearing them praised will be one of the major pleasures of life. We might as well try to abolish individuality of character as the instinct to possess things and cherish them particularly because they are one's own. Even when everybody owns a motor-car, the Utopian citizen will obtain pleasure from imagining that his own car is in some way or other distinguished from other cars and a little more desirable than any of them. Either it will do more miles to the gallon or it will be a better hill-climber; either it will have some peculiarity of design that sets it gloriously apart, or it will be so perfectly sprung that no stranger given a lift could fail to take notice of it. I do not mean that the Utopian will go about boasting or that he will even sit in his car with a boastful demeanour. But he will like hearing it praised, and dislike hearing it made fun of. It will always be a safe rule to the end of the world, if you hear a man making fun of his own car, to try to find a good word to say for it, if it is only that it was cheap for the money.

The possessive instinct can be defended, however, not only on the ground that it gives human beings pleasure, but that it incites them to achievements that give other people pleasure. What lovely houses, what beautiful gardens have come into existence as the result of possessive pride! I do not suggest that the ideal gardener would refrain from making his garden beautiful if he knew that no human being would ever set eyes on it but himself. I do suggest, however, that the normal gardener feels doubly rewarded for his pains on the day on which he can show his blooms to strangers. Have you ever been to Brimpton and seen the dahlias and watched the owner's face as he waits for the intoxicating words of commendation of his masterpieces? I, a complete stranger, have been addressed by a saintly clergyman in Salisbury Close and invited to visit his garden, where, I am sure he felt, were flowers growing of a beauty and fragrance unparalleled outside that earthly paradise. Never did I realise more acutely the creative splendour of the possessive instinct and its exquisite innocence. For the possessive instinct at its best is not a mere instinct to possess things of one's own; it is an instinct to possess things so beautiful that their beauty will be worth sharing with one's fellow-mortals.

There is no denying that the possessive instinct can be perverted and distorted into horrid shapes. It has produced the Gradgrinds of the industrial age, the slum landlords, and the magnates who swept the peasants from their territories to make room for sport. Every virtue has its perversion, however. Individuality of character is perverted into ruthless egoism; clemency is perverted into sentimentalism; idealism is perverted into doctrinnaire cruelty. It is no argument for hating a virtue that it needs only a twist to turn it into a vice. I often think that the people who denounce patriotism are people who judge patriotism only by its jingoistic perversions. Patriotism seems to me to be not only one of the most natural, but one of the most beautiful expressions of the possessive instinct. It is difficult to imagine the civilisation of Athens without it. It is difficult to imagine any civilisation without it. I can see no reason why, even in a World State, the national patriotism of the Englishman should not survive as the county patriotism of the Yorkshireman survives in a unified England. It is surely obvious that every country, every county, every city, is trebly fortunate if its citizens feel pride in possessing it as their own. It has long been the custom to deplore the comparative feebleness of civic patriotism among Londoners, and it is difficult to believe that, if Londoners had been possessively prouder of London, they would not have built a nobler city on the Thames.

I agree that no philosopher could commend the possessive instinct unreservedly. Like every other instinct, it is good only when controlled by reason and considerateness. As expressed in patriotism it easily becomes aggressive, since human beings share some of the qualities of game-cocks. In smaller affairs, again, we sometimes see the collector of the manuscript letters of dead poets so corrupted by the possessive passion that he will not permit their publication, feeling that they are all the more his own because the world at large cannot read them. And anyone could name scores of examples of the danger of giving the possessive instinct complete control. On the other hand, it is no use trying to abolish it, so that we may as well make the best of it. And, the best is very good indeed. Without the instinct, our homes and our clothes would be more slovenly. The possessive instinct, creatively expressed, can fill a room as with sunshine. How it brightens the pathos of the poor in Cordoba! The very dogs and cats that add so much to the happiness of mankind owe the luxury of their existence to it. The boats in the harbour, with their pretty colours, would have been less pretty but for the possessive instinct. I will swear that the shipyard workers feel a pride of possession in the great ships they build. We are inspired by the possessive instinct, indeed, even in regard to things that we do not actually possess. The groom feels that his employer's horses are not only his employer's but his own. I fancy that the gardener in St. James's Park, having brought to flower a marvellous bed of tulips, invites his friends to inspect them in some such possessive phrase as: "You must come and see my tulips."

The logical conclusion from all this, I suppose, would be that, being possessively inclined, I ought to have my wireless set overhauled and mended. I have always found, unfortunately, that overhauling and mending it only make it worse. My possessive instinct expresses itself in regard to it only in not liking to hear it run down, and in rather liking to hear it praised by strangers. Perhaps I am not quite possessive enough. If I were, I suspect I should go out to-morrow and buy a new set.

Y. Y.

# Correspondence

## A PEACE APPEAL TO MEN

SIR,—I have read with interest Dr. Sheppard's letter entitled "A Peace Appeal to Men" as well as "Critic's" somewhat ambiguous reference to it in the London Diary. Will you allow me as briefly as possible to put my own point of view?

Dr. Sheppard invites support for the following resolution: "We renounce war and never again directly or indirectly will we support or sanction another." I yield to no one in my admiration for Dr. Sheppard's valiant fight for peace. But his declaration as it stands does not go far enough. If we want to avoid war we must be prepared to join in stopping it. If we tried merely to keep out of it our isolation would, I am afraid, hasten rather than avert war in Europe; for if the nations of Europe believed that this country would never under any circumstances go further in the direction of collective defence than the employment of economic and non-military measures for the prevention of war, their waning confidence in the principle of collective action would disappear altogether. They would then have to rely for their security upon individual defence. Armaments would continue to grow and the insecurity and fear caused by them would before long make war inevitable.

If war is to be prevented, national armaments must be reduced by international agreement. Security is impossible without such "disarmament"; and "disarmament" in turn must be rendered possible by the creation of a reliable and effective system of collective security.

In order to give sufficient confidence for a reduction in armaments to take place here and now, the collective system must include provision for the use of force in the last resort. Then we may hope that resort to the use of force will be unnecessary. But the willingness to act corporately must be made known in advance of any act of aggression.

Your "Critic," commenting on Dr. Sheppard's appeal, recog-

nises the vital distinction between collective defence and private war, i.e., war as an instrument of national policy; and, as I am glad to note, favours a policy of disarmament combined with collective defence against aggression. But (unfortunately, as I think), he writes as if collective defence depended upon the creation of "an international police force."

Let us get this matter clear. National armies will obviously remain in being for some time to come, if only to maintain internal order in their respective countries. An international army, if it were to be effective, would have to be stronger than any of them and would also have to be so placed geographically as to be available wherever it might be wanted. The creation of such an international army is therefore administratively impracticable and politically undesirable at the present time. And much the same might be said of an international navy. National air forces are not, however, needed to maintain internal order and might be abolished if civil aviation were internationally controlled, perhaps with the aid of an international air force.

The force available for collective defence against aggression should therefore consist, for the present, of national armies and national navies pledged to use the strength of all for the defence of each together with an international air force for the purpose (*inter alia*) of preventing the misuse of civil aircraft for military purposes when national military and naval aircraft have been abolished. But such an air force is not at all the same thing as "an international air police force," designed to bomb an aggressor's army and navy into submission and perhaps also to coerce or punish an aggressively minded civilian population.

League of Nations Union, MAXWELL GARNETT
15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1.

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SIR,—"We renounce war and never again directly or indirectly will we support or sanction another." (Resolution proposed by the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard).

If you or I were to pass a resolution to spend the rest of our living days in perfect peace and happiness—mutely oblivious of whatever was going on around us—we would have a better chance of succeeding in our resolution than the supporters of the resolution for peace proposed above.

We most of us must believe there is purpose in life—especially in the inevitability of the law of cause and effect, and there seems no reason to me why the passing or supporting of such a resolution should release the world from the consequences of its ill-conceived statesmanship ever since the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. There's no use digging our toes in and saying "Whatever occurs anywhere to anyone in the world we shall not intervene, however flagrant the injustice, because we might have to fight!" The attitude is uncompromising certainly, but so is a donkey or a mule, and it will take something a great deal more constructive than this resolution, and a great deal of real hard work on the part of the whole of mankind to undo the damage done by the short-sighted nationalistic policies of the last fifteen years. MAURICE KEATING

The Royal Automobile Club, S.W.1.

## COMPENSATION FOR SLUM PROPERTY

SIR,—The present cry for compensation for working class houses condemned under the Housing Act, 1930, may to those without experience in dealing with this problem seem to be well grounded. At first glance it seems very unfair that a landlord should be deprived of a dividend-paying house in which he has invested capital without some compensation. But if the matter is examined carefully, grave doubts are aroused as to the justice in compelling the community to again pay capital which has been repaid over and over again since the house was first built. Much has been said about "confiscation" and "bad meat," but it is nearer the mark to cite the case of the owner of a hackney carriage who, when applying for a licence to carry passengers, was refused on the grounds that his vehicle was no longer roadworthy.

Would such an owner be entitled to asked for compensation on the grounds that his vehicle had been condemned? Such a claim would be laughed out of court. Yet his claim is precisely the same as the slum landlord's. He is losing a dividend-paying concern and for the same reason—it is no longer fit for use by the community. Those who possess a business mind will immediately discern why owners of condemned vehicles do not press such claims. They being business people do, or at least should, run their affairs on business lines and provide for such inevitable contingencies by an adequate depreciation fund, so that when the ill-fated day arrives, the vehicle is scrapped and a new one bought.

How many working-class houses can boast of a depreciation fund? Thus we find houses which have paid for themselves many times but have not a spot of hard cash behind them. The shortage of houses has accentuated this position. Competition in letting is dead; thus the incentive to repair and decorate to attract probable tenants is no longer necessary. Landlords under such conditions may offer a debased article and obtain exorbitant rent from the unfortunate people who must have a roof to cover their heads.

Another cause for dilapidations is that many people have invested their small savings in cottages, and in order to keep themselves independent bleed the property to the extent of anything round about 25 per cent. per annum upon the capital originally expended when the house was first built.

The present writer met a case where a house costing about £120 to build was let at a rent of £1 per week, or again three cottages let pre-war at 2*s*. per week were, until recently condemned, let at 10*s*. per week.

It would appear that not only is the slum landlord not entitled to compensation, but that he should have suffered the fate of any other business man who failed to carry out his obligations to his customers. He should have gone bankrupt long since and his business of selling inferior services smashed.

Here is a formula for compensation for slum property:

Allow thirty years purchase.
Add 5 per cent. interest per annum.
Add 15 per cent repairs per annum.

Should it be found that the sum received in rent since the house was built is insufficient to cover the total, make up the difference from public funds, but if more than that has been received no compensation should be given. SANITARY INSPECTOR

## A CHILDREN'S MINIMUM

SIR,—Six months ago you allowed us to appeal to your readers for help in a campaign which was then starting to press forward certain measures aimed to secure that no child by reason of the poverty of its parents should be deprived of sufficient nourishment for healthy life.

Since then the Children's Minimum Committee has obtained the co-operation of nearly all the leading organisations interested in child welfare. It has organised deputations to the Prime Minister and to each of the Government Departments concerned, gathered an increasing body of public support, circularised information to Members of Parliament, helped in bringing pressure to bear on Local Authorities, and finally submitted three detailed Memoranda to the Unemployment Assistance Board.

Except in the provision of cheap milk for schools we cannot claim to have made much progress yet in the actual achievement of our objectives—though we believe that their clearer definition in terms of legislative and administrative change and the considerable stir of public opinion may bring results in time.

A great number of children are still going without the food they need. The financial provisions of the Milk Bill budgeted for the supply of cheap milk to only 2-3 million of the 6 million children in elementary schools and no cheap milk is available for expectant and nursing mothers nor for children below school age. Many Local Authorities make very scanty use of their existing powers to give free milk and meals to necessitous children, either at child welfare centres or in the schools. We want to continue our efforts for more adequate provision in all these directions.

The welfare of the children of unemployed parents will depend very largely on the decisions arrived at during the next month or two by the Unemployment Assistance Board and by the Insurance Statutory Committee. We are urging upon both these bodies that the scales laid down should be at least sufficient for the needs of those with families.

But we have no money even to keep our organisation together during the next few months. We ask those who join in our aim and believe that the Committee is doing useful work to help us to carry it on a little longer by sending a donation to the address below. We would be glad to send a full report of our work and expenditure (of £80) to anyone who is interested. MARJORIE E. GREEN,
A Children's Minimum (Organising Committee), Secretary
116, Thames House, Millbank, S.W.1.

## POLITICAL PRISONERS IN GERMANY

SIR,—In the early days of the present regime in Germany it was realised that many thousands of Liberals, Socialists, Communists, Pacifists and Jewish intellectuals were being detained

in concentration camps and suffered gravely from ill-treatment. It is perhaps not now equally appreciated that, in spite of the widely announced amnesty at Hindenburg's death, the same state of affairs persists to-day. It is in fact even more serious, for the Propaganda Ministry and the Ministry of Justice have made the amnesty the occasion for declaring that concentration camps are now so "unimportant" a part of German life that it is no longer desirable to allow strangers access to any of them.

The impression is thus attempted to be given that prisoners are few and all is well with them. This is far from being the case. The numbers are still many and include several notable people. Among these are, for instance :—

Ernest Thaelmann, now after 18 months shortly to be tried in the "People's" Court.

Ernst Torgler, acquitted at Leipzig in the Reichstag Fire Trial.

Carl von Ossietski, formerly editor of the pacifist weekly, *Die Weltbuenhe*.

Dr. Carl Mierendorf, formerly Social Democratic Member of the Reichstag.

Fritz Kuester, former President of the "Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft."

Dr. Hans Litten, the non-party lawyer who defended workers before the Courts between 1928 and 1932.

Dr. Theo. Neubauer, former Communist Member of the Reichstag whose release was promised several months ago,

and Ludwig Renn, the world-famous author of *War* and other pacifist novels.

There are also still in detention many persons who are not accused of activities hostile to the German Government but who are kept as hostages for other members of their family. Among them are :—

Frau Else Steinfurth, widow of the Communist Member of the Prussian Diet put to death by the Nazis in February last. Her health is such that unless released she is not expected to survive long.

Frau Centa Beimler, whose husband escaped from the camp at Dachau ; also her sister and young nephew.

Frau Annemarie Jacobs, a nurse.

Frau Cilly Nadolny, the young wife of a Communist militant who was arrested when inquiring after the fate of her husband.

There is, further, only too good reason for believing that several of these people—men and women—have been seriously ill-treated in prison either with a view to obtaining information or of intimidating their relatives.

G. P. GOOCH
4 Downside Crescent, MARY AGNES HAMILTON
Hampstead, N.W.3. WINIFRED HOLTBY
JOHN MACMURRAY
HENRY W. NEVINSON
A. MAUDE ROYDEN

[We regret to see from the press of October 24th that Dr. Neubauer has now been sentenced to seven months' imprisonment for possessing forged identity papers.—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

## HOTEL DIVORCE

SIR,—As one who loves England ; and, through the advantage of education at one of our smaller public schools, having a secret regard for gentleness, I view with considerable dismay the passing of "Hotel evidence," one of our great national institutions.

A gentleman to-day has little opportunity of showing his superior code of morality to females and cads. Rarely is a woman old or feminine enough to allow him to offer his seat without appearing officious, and the little courtesies of life are rapidly disappearing. Now, according to the dicta of the new President of the Divorce Court, he is not allowed to behave as a gentleman should to his wife, and free her in the historic and customary way from the bonds of matrimony with a permanent allowance.

Adultery is the only gate to freedom ; the decent thing was in the past a week-end with a "woman unknown" ; this was stopped years ago by a judge who thought the woman's name ought to be revealed. Of course, this made it generally impossible for a gentleman to have the lady he was about to marry for the week-end, and the habit grew up of "giving Hotel evidence" with any female.

Whether the President will be able to over-ride this long-established English method of obtaining freedom is doubtful. Meanwhile, the direct results will be a closing down of hotels in our popular seaside resorts, because not only will they lose custom, but also the three or four guineas demanded for production to the petitioner's solicitors of a signed register, and the further evidence fees at court.

Secondly, the middle-aged ex-wife, living well on a permanent maintenance, will no longer exist to distribute largesse on tradesmen and small shop-keepers.

Thirdly, a serious falling off of the only species of litigation that is on the increase ; this will mean a loss of income to the nation from Court fees, and a serious loss of work to the already overcrowded legal profession. Is one man strong enough to oppose such strong-vested interests ?

On the other side of the picture, the results will be more unhappily married couples, and more legal separations ; leading possibly to minor emendments of the Divorce Laws, and more carefully drafted deeds and other arrangements based on illicit cohabitation.

Perhaps it would be better to close the Divorce Courts for a year, to discover a truer system of marriage ; as it was once suggested the churches should be closed to find true religion. But then true marriage might not fit the gentleman's code of morality. Let us be thankful there are the colonies and bachelor flats for women !

AMBROSE E. APPELBY
7 New Square,
Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.

## EDWARD GIBBON

SIR,—I am about to begin work on a biography of Gibbon. Since the publication of my edition of his journals in 1929, an amount of new material has come to light which leads me to believe that there may still be a number of his letters unpublished in private collections. For any information concerning these or any other relevant matter, I should be extremely grateful. Any documents sent to me would be treated with the greatest care and returned as soon as copied.

D. M. LOW
37 Roland Mews, London, S.W.7.

## A QUINQUENNIAL CENSUS

SIR,—Under the provisions of the Census Act of 1920 it is lawful for His Majesty by Order in Council to direct that a Census should be taken for Great Britain or any part thereof in the year 1936. The intention of this provision was to make possible the taking of the Census of Population quinquennially instead of only decennially as at present. The opportunity was not taken in 1926.

The need for recent statistics of the distribution of population by sex, age, locality and occupation becomes more urgent with every development of State activities, and under the present system, and with the length of time found necessary before the complete publication of the Census results, we have continually to depend on approximations based on data that may be as much as fourteen years out of date—the Industrial Tables for 1931 are not yet published, and the 1921 figures are hopelessly out of date.

An intermediate Census need not be so detailed as is that with which we are familiar, and, it may be hoped, would not take so long to analyse. The object of this letter is to arouse public interest in the subject, for if there is to be a Census in 1936 the necessary Order in Council must soon be made.

London School of Economics. ARTHUR L. BOWLEY

## VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS

SIR,—Many readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION must have welcomed in the last issue the letter of a surgeon pointing out some of the misstatements which marred the interesting, and in many ways valuable, article on voluntary hospitals in the number of September 29th. One could wish that his criticism had been carried farther, for there are other statements which indicate that the writer of the article is not cognisant of the lines on which work is developing in the most up-to-date hospitals. To take an instance—the words of the Webbs written in 1910 are quoted : "As soon as a patient is well enough to be discharged his case disappears from the ken of the hospital staff," and this is said to be "broadly" true of to-day. Perhaps all depends on the interpretation of the word "broadly," for there is "much virtue in an if !"

It seems, however, a pity that the writer should ignore :

(1) The medical "follow up" departments functioning to-day in

many hospitals, which were started because the medical staff were *not* content to lose sight of patients but wished to know the result of the treatment given, and to continue treatment should it seem advisable. (The importance of this both for reasons of individual health and for research purposes is obvious.)

(2) The fact that there is a large amount of skilled social work for the welfare of patients being carried out, in close conjunction with medical work, in those hospitals where there are trained almoners.

It would have been more generous to a profession which is striving, however imperfectly, to reduce and alleviate human suffering if the writer, instead of ignoring its existence, had lamented the comparatively slow development of the work. He might also have pointed to the disquieting fact that, in the few cases where public hospitals have appointed trained almoners, the emphasis has, so far, been laid on the administrative and financial side of the work rather than on the human. It has been left to the voluntary hospitals to stress the importance of the co-operation of doctor, nurse and almoner in curative work and to show that if the patient who is in difficulties is treated as an individual, as a whole human being, and not as "a case," much unnecessary suffering can be avoided. A HOSPITAL ALMONER

[This letter is referred to in this week's London Diary.—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

## FLOGGING IN KENYA

SIR,—As briefly as possible, may I reply to Mr. Begbie's queries in your issue of October 20th?

It is, of course, illegal in any British territory for any private individual to flog, or otherwise assault, any native, irrespective of the severity of such chastisement. In actual practice some employers give delinquents the option of being dealt with by such correction, in preference to fines (which, when imposed by employers are just as illegal, and much more unpopular), or going for trial to court, maybe entailing a long walk, and much delay, and resulting in fines (still unpopular, although legal), or imprisonment, which is an alien innovation of ours foreign to all East African cultures. In many tribes of old mutilation was a regular form of punishment, and a few strokes—exceedingly rarely causing more than temporary pain—are a very mild variant of what the native understands. Complaints against beatings can always be made, and are made whenever the native feels an injustice has been done; but, in my experience, this very rarely occurs, because the punishments have been merited and are in a form preferred by the natives. Far more complaints reach the courts of mere smackings of houseboys by irritated housewives.

Of course, on the mines and in other big employment centres, assaulting a native employee means dismissal for the white man. The same idea will ultimately prevail on farms, but it is difficult in new countries to arrive speedily at such perfection in practice, though Mr. Begbie may rest assured that the natives have full protection at law. It really does not work badly. Any employer who is unjust or hasty tempered, let alone brutal, simply does not get native labour. The natives flock to those they like.

More real injustice, at any rate in the natives' eyes—and, surely, they are most concerned—often arises from their subjection to our law and our procedure, and then they have no redress, as they have in the cases mentioned.

It is because I am an ex-magistrate and not an ex-settler, that I think I should give expression to this statement of facts. I do not say it is right, but I fear it is inevitable as a passing phase in development, and I believe it is not generally unacceptable to the natives themselves. F. H. MELLAND

United University Club, S.W.1.

## GERMAN REFUGEES

SIR,—I have just returned from Paris, where the state of the German refugees, many of whom are beginning their second winter, is desperate. Although a certain number have found work, and large numbers have been sent back to Germany and elsewhere, there are between two and three thousand needing help, a number constantly added to as one after another comes to the end of savings and drops lower and lower in the social scale.

The struggles that families are making to maintain their standard of decency, cleanliness and self-respect, are little short of heroic, and their state is hardly less pitiful than that of the young men, who are intensely despairing of their future, nervous, and half-starved. The seventy infants lately born to the refugee mothers lose strength and weight instead of gaining it, because of the deplorable conditions under which their mothers exist.

The Entr'aide Européenne, which owes its origin to the French Quakers of the Paris Centre of the Friends Service Council, is the only French organisation now giving any help to the refugees, the Comité Nationale, which gave such generous assistance last winter, having come to the end of its funds. It has been re-organised, and with the help of skilled social workers hopes to be able to continue to find places and work for as many as possible of the refugees. The provision of tools and outfits is expensive but well worth while, since it enables the worker to be independent, and restores his self-respect.

Help is very badly needed. I received this morning from Paris a letter containing the following sentence:—

"We were greatly distressed this morning by the number of people coming for money help to pay their rent due on the 15th of October. Not far from 5,000 francs were asked for by interesting people who are in danger of being thrown into the streets in a week or two."

Help may be sent either to—

Friends House,
Euston Road,
London, N.W.1.

or direct to the office of—

l'Entr'aide Européenne,
55 rue de Ponthieu,
Paris VIII.

44 Upper Park Road, N.W.3. E. M. PYE

## TIPPING BEFORE THE MEAL

SIR,—As many of your readers will remember, Y.Y.'s desire is fulfilled—in Japan. One pays *chadai* (to the host, not the waiters—or rather waitresses) immediately on arriving at the hotel. And the host is enabled to judge by the size of the tip the kind of accommodation, meals and service one expects.

*Countryman* Office, J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT
Idbury, Kingham, Oxfordshire.

# Miscellany

## THE BIG HOUSE

PASSING along a side-street of the West End one afternoon, I saw some stage-furniture being hauled out through a slit in a theatre's back-wall. It was a big theatre and the furniture looked very small; tawdry, too, for it was "period" stuff and demanded silks and perruques, bright lights and gay companions, instead of the dark-suited porters who were shifting it through a grey autumn drizzle into their dark depressing vans. What made the spectacle more gloomy was the knowledge that these brocaded chairs and ornate tables had been carried there in vain. The play and the players had failed them; their re-entry to the world of light had been only a fiasco. So back they went, unwanted, to their cellarage.

It was a big theatre, as I said, and the play had been a little one. In a smaller house its qualities might have seemed more attractive. But it is a fact of playgoing that people coming to a great house have great expectations. The producer had evidently felt that something ought to be done in a large manner; so he had imported into his second act a scarcely relevant crowd, which cost the management some money and could do nothing to magnify such merits as the play possessed. Poor crowd! They, like the furniture, had been dispersed at short notice. They, like its principals, may have had great expectations of "a run." A bad time for the Big House is also a bad time for "supers" and chorus-girls and scene-shifters and all the "lower deck" of Shaftesbury Avenue.

There was a period when to own any sort of theatre in Central London was to be rich. Now the ownership of a large theatre may be only an embarrassment. This house, now wrapped in melancholy calm with closed doors and lamps unlit, has the high traditions of a famous name and is used to the blare and bustle of success. After passing it, I read in

my evening paper that the directors of Drury Lane had been telling a tale of woe to their shareholders. The grandiose attractions had failed to attract. It was hard to replace them with grandiosity likely to show a profit.

One of the shareholders had cried out for a real showman to save the day. But showmen, however real, cannot alter the taste and trend of the time and the Big Spectacular Drama, on which the big house must in general rely, is too often a losing proposition. At the Hippodrome, musical comedy still prospers, and at the Palladium variety is always well attended. These houses have sustained their continuity of style and popularity. They can carry their weight. But it needs courage indeed to launch a large production elsewhere. A minimum of ten thousand pounds must be spent before the curtain rises and the weekly expenses of a large musical production are enormous. It is possible to take enormous receipts; it is also possible to take less than would suffice to keep a tiny comedy alive. In the latter event, the loss is crushing. A bad "first night," depressing "notices," and months of labour, thousands of capital, have vanished.

A vicious circle has now been established. These big shows need big "stars," and the big "stars" are not available. The films are more attractive. Films do not "flop" in the obvious and sensational way of an unsuccessful play. The money, big money, is paid over before the film is shown. The attractions of a high stage-salary diminish when six weeks' rehearsal must be given for nothing, and the play which results may vanish inside a month. So the "great names" are not available for the Big House. The answer "Make new names, build up new star-attractions," is not very helpful. How can new stars of the big show arrive when there are no big shows in which to launch them? Miss Gracie Fields could probably carry a big show, but she prefers variety and films. Why should she desert such profitable certainties for the long rehearsals and the hazards of a spectacular musical piece? It is possible to import foreigners and those foreigners may be artists of great and genuine lustre; but it takes time to convince the public of the fact and, in the theatre, time is money. The late Anny Ahlers, for instance, was a great success in *Dubarry*; but it took time and courage to establish her popularity. With less resolve and audacity on the part of her promoter, the show might have closed down almost at once.

There was a time when the British public found life insufferable without continuous doses of musical comedy. Central London could support half a dozen of these entertainments at once. Now, two or three seem to be more than enough. That may be taken as a sign that we are growing up; but it would be rash to be confident on this score. The musical-comedy supporters have transferred their patronage to the "musicals" of Hollywood and Elstree. The true theatre public has certainly not diminished; its members pack the small houses where the plays they care about are being presented, the St. Martin's, Ambassadors, Duchess. Revue has suffered a decline of favour, but is now restored. But revue does not need a very big house, and is usually improved by a close contact of stage and auditorium. One of the big houses has temporarily solved its problem by a revival of German's *Merrie England*, and this, if its renewed popularity endures, may restore the operetta to our stage. Another way out is to take over a West End piece which has done well enough in a small theatre and run it at cut prices. But only certain kinds of play will stand this kind of migration, and theatres have their dignity to remember. It would probably do "The Lane" more harm than good to become associated with a cheap line of goods. With a public that has out-grown melodrama and the ordinary kind of musical comedy, it is no sinecure to be director of a big house. Sir Oswald Stoll has tried Shakespeare and Shakespeare can draw big money in the West End, as Mr. Godfrey Tearle reminded his audience at a luncheon given to celebrate the arrival of the "New Temple" edition. But people who do try it do not go on very long. No, in these days, a lease of the Midget Theatre is preferable to owning the Magnificent. IVOR BROWN

# SAUCERS AND SOCIALISM

OUR feelings for the material objects most closely connected with us are so profound that we take them for granted. Unnumbered books have been written about our response to works of art, but very little about our relation to the commonest objects of life, the objects which complement and as it were continue our bodies. Our clothes, our tools (spades or thimbles or fountain-pens), the vessels we eat and drink from, are intimate though inanimate friends, into which we project our personalities, and I choose the word "friends," not out of whimsicality, but because I believe that such objects excite in most men and women an affection which is no less important for being largely subconscious. This emotion is ultimately erotic rather than aesthetic, but it is desirable for our satisfaction that the objects, like the persons, with which we are intimate, should have a good character. To suppose that an artisan's pleasure in life is affected by the design of his tea-cups will appear to the modern political "realist" a bourgeois fancy, typical of such out-moded Utopians as William Morris. But if independently of theory you keep your eyes open to the various and "irrational" ways of your fellows (and this I suggest is the true realism), you perceive that the country man in spite of ignorance, poverty and hardship, has frequently a satisfaction within himself rarely known to the materially better-off artisan in the town. You can dismiss this as mere animal hebetude, but I think it is more realistic to recognise it as the result of his more harmonious environment. I believe, consequently, that an improvement in the design of the artifacts which surround the town-dweller—buildings, clothes and the whole furniture of daily life—is most practically important. The disorder, incompetence and unhealthiness of an uncontrolled economic system are exactly reflected in the streets and rooms of the last hundred years. It is like a nightmare to visit the British Industries Fair, and so it would be to walk through any great city, if we were not blinded or corrupted by familiarity with ugliness. I do not suggest that most artisans are very aware of this ugliness—they think a gaily ornamented cinema or an abominably designed wall-paper very pretty, but I do maintain that this ugliness affects them. And the discontent which the squalor of their environment subconsciously feeds may, for the moment, be welcome to economic and political reformers, but it will not be allayed by their reforms, unless these can affect its source. No improvement in social organisation will suffice that does not provide an environment with which men and women can live in harmony. And well-designed objects for personal use are among the most important parts of such an environment.

These wide considerations were buzzing confusedly in my head as I walked away from an exhibition of china and glass at Harrod's. It seemed to me a very important exhibition, a sign that manufacturers are regaining contact with contemporary artists after a century of insolent ignorance. That carpets, curtains and cups should be designed by the best artists available, is a truism so little acted upon that it has become a paradox. Most of our textiles and almost all our ceramics are in fact designed by employees who would be mistaken for artists by no educated person. And manufacturers have, until recently, had no misgivings, because Gresham's Law, which Mr. Aldous Huxley has pointed out applies to literature, applies also to the arts of design: bad designs tend to drive good ones out of circulation. But the spread of education and a revival of visual sensibility (which suffered a curious paralysis in the nineteenth century), are enlarging the demand for well-designed objects of use. Good clothing textiles are now reasonably common, for the manufacturers of these have been obliged to learn a thing or two from Paris. Furnishing textiles are improving a little. The firms making carpets, china and glass have been the most backward: it would be difficult to exaggerate the badness of the show they make at the British Industries Fair and the Ideal Home Exhibition. But now designs by thirty or more artists have

been commissioned and executed by Messrs. E. Brain in china, by Messrs. A. J. Wilkinson in earthenware, and by Messrs. Stuart (of Stourbridge) in glass. And the results, now being shown at Harrods, are amazingly good, better indeed than anything I have seen elsewhere in Europe or America.

Inevitably, work by such a varied collection of artists is unequal in merit. I did not myself like the designs of Dame Laura Knight, or of Mr. and Mrs. Procter, but I expect there is a considerable public for them. Billie Waters, again, works in a Germano-Scandinavian style, which I specially abhor. But the interesting thing to me was the number of things that I did like. The designs for Vanessa Bell's tea-service and Duncan Grant's dinner-service are entirely worthy of these distinguished painters, ravishing in colour and sensitive in drawing: I can imagine no house of which they would not be worthy. If a tea-cup or a soup-plate could be said to sing, these services could be called musical. Angelica Bell's tea-service is the first publicly exhibited work, I fancy, of an artist for whom I prophesy a dazzling future: it is fresh as it were with the scent of hay. But the revelation to me in the exhibition was the work of Graham Sutherland. He has an extraordinary intuition of the demands made by the material alike in porcelain, earthenware and glass: his design, *Red Mottle*, struck me as the most successfully original thing in the show, but his *Red Panel* and, indeed, all his work is remarkable. John Armstrong is oddly unequal, but his dinner-service is a great success. Ben Nicholson, on the other hand, whose pictures show extraordinary taste, seems to have been utterly uninspired, and I preferred Paul Nash's glass to his china. Other artists who produced excellent work are Albert Ruthersston (especially his *Pink Daisy* and *Yellow Star*), Allan Walton (in his tea-set), Thomas Arnold and Freda Beardmore. I should like to try to analyse the acute pleasure to be won from the work of these various designers, but that would only be possible in the presence of the objects. I beg you to go and see for yourselves. The prices are low, and every day you can eat your dinner and drink your tea from works of art without having spent more than you would on any decorated service in an ordinary shop.

A final point must be made. Important as this experiment is, it is only, one hopes, a beginning. If these three firms have encouraging sales, they will presumably continue the good work. And if they do, it is important that the artists should collaborate more carefully in considering the shapes and *pâtes* for which their designs are intended. The earthenware is sound enough, but most of the china has a hard, rigid quality which contrasts unpleasantly with the free brushwork of the decoration. Moreover, some of the shapes (vegetable-dishes and soup-cups, for instance) are modernistic in the ugliest sense of an ugly word. The manufacturers have shown enterprise and good-will in commissioning the artists, and it would be graceful if these would show their appreciation by a closer study of the material. There is still a long way to go before pottery of this sort can be marketed at prices possible to the great mass of the public. But how can it ever reach them, unless the intelligentsia have the intelligence to give a lead?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

### "Overture 1920" at the Phœnix

The theme of this play is the ineffectuality of mere idealism, even when allied to the noblest courage, unless directed by ruthless reasoning. Karl Ritter, a distinguished young ex-officer of the Junker class and a rather vague lover of humanity, becomes leader of the People's army in the town of Herfeld in the revolutionary Germany of 1920. Associated with him is Maxim, former lover of Ritter's mistress, a Communist of real revolutionary capacity, who has discarded sentiment and honour in favour of pure reason. Conflict inevitably develops between Ritter and Maxim when, after the rout of the People's army, Maxim wishes, in the name of Reason, to shoot the policemen who have been captured. Ritter, in the name of Humanity, refuses to shoot prisoners, so Maxim announces that the Communist Army, eight hundred strong, which was to have come to the aid of the rebels, will not now fight under Ritter's command. Then the play moves swiftly to its tragic conclusion. Ritter, the idealist soldier, is prevented by Communist opposition from defending the town, and his only course is surrender. An ultimatum is received from General Von Harndorff. Four of the rebel leaders, dead or alive, must surrender as the price of the lives of their fellow citizens. Ritter, Kathie, Maxim and Doctor Levy agree to give themselves up. Then Maxim escapes by flight, Levy by suicide. Kathie saves her life by yielding to the General's pressing demand for Maxim's address, and Ritter is left alone to face the firing squad.

Robert Douglas, though lacking the strength that Colin Clive gave to the original production in New York in 1930, nevertheless gave a moving performance. As the Mayor of Herfeld, Lewis Casson was so good that one wishes he had had more to do. Henry Oscar, as Maxim, is excellent, and Ena Moon, as Kathie, struggled gallantly with a most difficult part. Nicholas Hannen, as Von Harndorff, gave additional dignity to a play which well deserves to be put on for a run.

### La Flambée qui s'éteint

M. Bernard's *Le feu qui reprend mal*, produced by Mr. Norman Marshall at the Gate Theatre, arouses interest and dissension. André Mérin's return home in 1918 from a German prison camp coincides with the departure of the Americans, one of whom has been billeted on his wife, Blanche. The husband suspects his wife's fidelity, and this spoils their happiness. If Harpagon *is* avarice, André *is* jealousy. No other characteristic in him, no interest in the only two other characters, no change of scene, is allowed to divert attention from this single quality. The whole effect is swift and simple, and we accept his jealousy as something tremendous. But when expectation demands a whale there issues a mouse. Blanche listens to her father-in-law, in the firelight, murmuring platitudes in the key of *My Old Dutch*, strokes a comfortable armchair, and elects to stay and cosset the husband who has tortured her past endurance. Now, either André's jealousy was as insupportable as the play suggested, or this conclusion is false. There must be a sequence between passion and its issue, or passion becomes bombast. The play was well acted and produced, though Miss Casartelli's expression as a wide-eyed "broken doll" grew a little tiresome. Mr. Wolfit gave a convincing study of the husband.

## THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, October 26th—
- Dr. Glover on "War and the Aggressive Impulse," Caxton Hall, 8.30.
- "Royal Baggage," Little Theatre.
- B.B.C. Chamber Concert, Broadcasting House, 8.15.

SATURDAY, October 27th—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- Schnabel, Queen's Hall, 3.
- Mark Hambourg, Aeolian Hall, 3.15.
- Mr. Barratt Brown on "Education and Democracy," Moseley Road Institute, Birmingham, 6.

SUNDAY, October 28th—
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "Some Impressions of Scandinavia," Conway Hall, 11.
- Film Society, Tivoli, 2.30.
- Council for Civil Liberties. Demonstration against the Sedition Bill. Speakers from all political parties, Trafalgar Square, 3.
- The Griller String Quartet, Maurice Hall, Crowndale Road, 6.30.
- William Mellor on "The Southport Conference and After," Willoughby Hall, 1, Willoughby Road, Hampstead, 7.30.
- The Rt. Hon. Tom Kennedy on "Local Government," William Morris Hall, 267, The Broadway, Wimbledon, 7.30.

MONDAY, October 29th—
- "Miracle at Verdun," Embassy Theatre.

TUESDAY, October 30th—
- Mr. Leonard Montefiore on "Jewish Persecutions: Ancient and Modern," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- Mr. Emile Burns on "A Soviet Britain," Lecture Hall, London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, 6.
- Mass Lobbying of Members of Parliament against the Sedition Bill, House of Commons, 8.
- S. C. Wyatt on "Kemal Pasha," Morley College, 8.

WEDNESDAY, October 31st—
- "Sweet Aloes," Wyndham's Theatre.

THURSDAY, November 1st—
- Archdeacon Storrs on "Liberal Evangelicalism," St. Edmonds, Lombard Street, 1.10.
- Royal Philharmonic Society (Beecham), Queen's Hall, 8.15.

FRIDAY, November 2nd—
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "Two Amateur Dictators," Conway Hall, 7.30.

# Current Literature

## BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE first story in *A Modern Lover* by D. H. Lawrence (Secker, 7*s.* 6*d.*), which gives the title to what the publishers tell us is a final collection of his fiction, deals with the familiar situation of the young man who has acquired education and gentlemanly speech, returning to visit the farm near the colliery village and meeting his old love and her new sweetheart. It is a very early story—the publishers tell us that it and five other short stories in the book belong to Lawrence's earliest period, 1910–11. No doubt they are right as regards this story, though their information on chronology is not always to be trusted. For example *The Shades of Spring* is included in *The Tales of D. H. Lawrence* (Secker, 10*s.* 6*d.*), which is stated to be a collection of the whole of Lawrence's shorter fiction from *The Prussian Officer* (1914) to his death. It was, however, written by the autumn of 1912 and is a variation on the same situation as *A Modern Lover*. Though the details of the story are quite different, there can be little doubt that Lawrence wove them both out of the same experience—and knowing that *A Modern Lover* was terribly raw stuff, he put it aside dissatisfied and wrote *The Shades of Spring* a year or two later in order to express his feeling. It is extremely interesting to compare them. *The Shades of Spring* is perhaps the most beautiful of Lawrence's early stories; it is full of the sentiment of revisiting an old sweetheart by a man whose manner of life has changed—but there is not a trace of sentimentality. *A Modern Lover* deals with the same subject but from a ridiculously self-conscious and conceited angle, dwelling at considerable length on the wit, polish, superior culture and charm of the returning young man. It is, moreover, full of ridiculous fine writing.

> What was it that he wanted, sought in the slow lapsing tide of days? . . . Of many people, his friends, he had asked that they would kindle again the smouldering embers of their experience; he had blown the low fires gently with his breath, and had leaned his fire towards their glow, and had breathed in the words that rose like fumes from the revived embers, till he was sick with the drug of sufferings and ecstasies and sensations, and the dreams that ensued. . . . Surely, surely somebody would give him enough of the philtre of life to stop the craving which tortured him hither and thither, enough to satisfy for a while, to intoxicate him till he could laugh the crystalline laughter of the star, and bathe on the retreating flood of twilight like a naked boy in the surf, clasping the waves and beating them and answering their wild clawings with laughter sometimes, and sometimes gasps of pain.

It is interesting to find that Lawrence during his Croydon period was still in such a pimply adolescent stage. By 1912 he was mature and had completely outgrown that sort of bosh.

* * *

The five stories which follow, though by no means Lawrence at his best, do not show this adolescence. If the date given by the publishers is correct, it would seem that in 1911 he was already a victim of the obsession—the subject which he was to drag into such a large part of his work during the rest of his life, that is the fight of the man with the woman who

> did not want to have the deeper part of herself in direct contact with, or under the influence, of any other intrinsic being. She wanted in the deepest sense to be free of him. . . . Above in the open she would give. But she must live perfectly free of herself and not at her source, be connected with anybody.

But is the early date for this correct? Until I am presented with irrefutable documentary proof, I find it impossible to believe that Lawrence invented Frieda before he met her, or that *The New Eve and the Old Adam* from which that passage is a quotation was not written after he had left England with her. I date it provisionally as the summer of 1913, after their return. It also appears reasonable to connect the stories *Strike-pay* and *Her Turn* with the coal strike of 1912, in which case three out of six stories are wrongly dated.

Hidden away behind these stories is the "unfinished novel Mr. Noon, written in 1921," which is one of the most light-hearted delightful things that Lawrence ever wrote. It may do something, I hope, to correct the false impression people have of his character. In the early days Lawrence often had tremendously high spirits and this novel, or episode, which is quite complete in itself, is probably the only satirical piece of writing, making fun of his characters, that he attempted. It should have been published by itself, or put in the forefront of the book. The story is the history of Mr. Noon's unfortunate "spoon" with Emmie Bostock. The institution of "spooning" is described in admirable detail: indeed Lawrence does here for the Midlands what Malinovsky has done for the Trobriand islanders in *The Sexual Life of Savages*.

> Monday and Monday morning's work-day grip was very near. . . . And the emotional luxury of Sunday deepened into a sort of desperation as the hour of sleep and Monday approached. There must be a climax; there must be a consummation. Chapel did not finish it off sufficiently. The elder men dashed off for a drink, the women went to each other's houses for an intense gossip and a bit of supper, the young people went off for a spoon. . . . The iron grip of Monday was closing. Meanwhile, dear young things, while the *frisson* of approaching captivity goes through you, to add an interior sting to your bliss, spoon, dears, spoon.

Lawrence, of course, though he knows all about it, disapproves of spooning far more than the most puritanical of parents. To him it is a blasphemous playing with the sacred expression of sex. He is here hostile to his characters whose misadventures he describes with comic power.

> He was famous as a spooner and she was famous as a sport. They had known each other off and on for years . . . Both having a sort of reputation to keep up, they were a little bit excited.

Lawrence is hostile, hence he is external to his characters, which means that he is writing in the traditional manner of English novelists since Fielding. He is thus able to express his sense of the comic which, though it has scarcely ever found its way into his writing, was one of the most striking of his qualities. There is, for example, a scene in which Mr. Noon goes out for a walk with the lady of forty who aspires to be his confidant and whom he suddenly sees as

> the soft, full, strange, unmated Aphrodite of forty, who had been through all ideal raptures of love and marriage, through it all, and through the foam of the fight for freedom, the sea of ideal right and wrong, and now was emerging, slowly, mysteriously, ivory-white and soft, woman still, leaving the sea of all her past, nay, the sea of all the extant human world behind her, and rising with dark eyes of age and experience, and a few grey hairs among the dark; soft, full bodied, mature and woman still, unpossessed, belonging nowhere and to no one, only to the unknown distance, the untrodden shore of all the sea of all the unknown knowledge.

He is of course ragging himself in this passage, for he was always only too liable to see things like that. Yet his gift for describing people in a few words is marvellous. Here is Aphrodite's husband:

> He was handsome with a high forehead and a small beard; a Socialist; something like Shakespeare's bust to look at, but more refined . . . He was a pure idealist, something of a Christ, but with an intruding touch of the goat.

* * *

Lawrence's weakness was believing in his own similes which dominated his mind and became mystically true pieces of symbolism. This determined his style and made wearisome his thought, but here the symbolic similes are amusing and do not get out of hand. Having properly entangled Mr. Noon in his spooning, Lawrence proceeds to lay a ferocious booby trap for him, to teach him better. Thus the plan of the story is that of the cautionary tale in which the spooner gets his deserts, is caught in the greenhouse by the infuriated old Bostock, loses his job as a school-teacher, and when he nobly pursues the girl, whom he fancies he has got into trouble, finds her in her bedroom in the arms of her fiancé. But, alas, the strain of detachment from his characters is too great for Lawrence; the comedy rapidly becomes farce and the farce itself dies away as he loses interest, until the story comes to the old soldier's end—of simply fading away.

DAVID GARNETT

## "FACILIS EST . . ."

**Retreat from Glory.** By R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART. *Putnam.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Lockhart's retreat is not to be understood in the sense of a hermit's cell, but of the rout of an army. He might, indeed, very well have called it "The Retreat from Moscow." For Moscow called out the best in Mr. Lockhart, he loved the place, he loved the people and perhaps even more important for a man of his temperament, he was, while there, passionately and romantically in love. Thus when he was suddenly left in charge of British interests to deal with the Bolshevik leaders, he showed those splendid qualities of intelligence, obstinacy, courage and cool-headedness, Scottish virtues, which he has described in action in Volume I of his autobiography, *Memoirs of a British Agent* (Putnam, 9*s.*). When he left Moscow he perforce left behind Moura, the Russian woman he loved, and brought back home a state of mind which probably only she could have ballasted. He was against intervention in Russia and in favour of recognising the Bolsheviks, which made him suspect in some quarters, while the Communists themselves suspected him of having had a hand in the attempted assassination of Lenin.

He was restless and dissatisfied, but not restless or dissatisfied enough to break away from the Foreign Office, ambitious but not ambitious enough to work very hard. If there was little scope for Scottish virtues there was plenty for the dissipation of energy. A passion for the Russian gypsies led him into the night life of any city he was in and once he had been given a post at Prague, he was doomed. Henceforward it was his fate to accept the substitute for the real thing. The very place was significant: Prague instead of Moscow, Czech instead of Russian, Masaryk instead of Lenin, and a Praguish *Nachtlocal* instead of Yar. Perhaps it is Mr. Lockhart's Macgregor blood which prevents his doing things on a small scale; he was in a small place, on a small salary, but he could not help living in a large way. Debts grew, were paid off, and grew again, and the appreciation of the crown doubled and tripled them in a few months. Thus when an opportunity came for him to sacrifice his pension and go into banking, Mr. Lockhart embraced it joyfully. But the methods of English banking made Mr. Montagu Norman's dreams of an English financial hegemony in Europe impossible of fulfilment. For the Bank of England to have really become the controlling force in European finance, it would have had to have become a real partner in industry, a heresy to English bankers, though they could scarcely have lost more by it than they did afterwards by the pure usury of borrowing money from the French and lending it to the Germans.

Mr. Lockhart had not a banker's temperament, and directly the English financiers began to draw in their horns and sell out their commitments, he saw that he must inevitably be cast adrift. An intimate knowledge of men and countries led him from one lucky scoop as a negotiator to another—and then Lord Beaverbrook offered him a career as a journalist.

Some such *Retreat from Glory* is the common lot of adventurous men as they fall into middle age; what happened to Mr. Lockhart happens in some slight degree to us all. But we are not all aware of it, or capable of expressing it, and it is owing to his capacity of self-revelation and to his honesty that the book is not only enthralling but terribly depressing. It is full of the most interesting anecdotes and vivid pictures of famous men. Dr. Benes is drawn at the greatest length and there is a picture of the Kaiser at Doorn, which for all its kindliness fails to conceal that he must be the greatest bore on earth, even among kings. But by far the most moving picture in Mr. Lockhart's book is when, after six years, he meets Moura, who had at last been able to leave Russia and travel across Europe to meet him.

> When it came to my turn, I stumbled miserably. What was there for me to say? When I looked back on those six years in Prague and Vienna, they seemed to stand out starkly sterile in the barrenness of their achievement. I had lost even my old impudent self-reliance. She heard that, after the war, a son had been born to me. She did not know, until I told her, that I had become a Catholic. Clumsily, stammeringly, like a schoolboy pleading guilty to his house-master, I blundered through the record of my debts and my follies.
>
> "Oh God!" she whispered softly, and I winced as the words left her lips. For a moment I expected reproaches, either of words or of looks. But she remained silent. . . .

There is something that all honest men must envy and respect in the man who can write like that about himself. There is, indeed, a touch of the Boswell in Mr. Lockhart.

DAVID BLACK

## NEW COUNTRY REVISITED

**A Hope for Poetry.** By C. DAY LEWIS. *Blackwell.* 6*s.*

**New Signatures.** Edited by Michael Roberts. 3rd Edition. *Hogarth Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

**Poems.** By STEPHEN SPENDER. 2nd Edition. *Faber and Faber.* 5*s.*

**The Noise of History.** By JOHN LEHMANN. *Hogarth Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

**Open the Sky.** By JOHN PUDNEY. *Boriswood.* 5*s.*

We are always, of course, on the brink of a poetic revival—that is taken for granted. Several people have said lately that, as far as poetry goes, we have already reached another Elizabethan age; they go on to say that too many novels are written nowadays, that the theatre is dead, and so on. All these generalisations go together; and the first of them, at least, is untrue. No age of poets, for example, was ever farther than ours from the Elizabethans; and if the word "Elizabethan" is merely used as a cant word to signify "vital," then the hope, however pious, is still I think misplaced. Such exaggerations, even coming from a respectable critical source, are likely to do more harm than good. Nevertheless, it is true to assert that English poetry to-day is in a far more interesting state than it was five years ago; and this change has been due to the poets of *New Signatures*. It is a volume which I have recommended several times before, and I am glad to see now, two years after its publication, that it has reached a third edition. The introduction by Mr. Michael Roberts, and some of the individual poems, may not seem to us now of smashing importance; but that is a measure of the success which this movement has enjoyed since—readers of poetry are already taking it for granted. And the pleasure of finding, once more, a *definite movement* among English poets has been at least partly responsible for its success; for we may be sure that many who have followed in its train have only the vaguest idea of what it is all about, but are glad to know that there is something astir somewhere. It has needed a concerted movement, and not merely a number of individual efforts, to awaken even a minor general interest. Mr. Day Lewis wrote his *Transitional Poem* in 1929, three years before the appearance of *New Signatures*, and *From Feathers to Iron* in 1931. Mr. Auden's *Poems* were published in the same year. But how many people had even heard of Mr. Day Lewis or Mr. Auden, before Mr. Roberts's anthology made its appearance? Since then, of course, the *movement* has succeeded, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Auden have been generally recognised (though the first has still not received his full due), and Mr. Stephen Spender, a better poet in my opinion than either, has (so to speak) raced through two editions in less than a year.

The movement as a whole has been definitely Communist; and here I should like to quote a passage from Mr. Day Lewis's *A Hope for Poetry* which bears directly on this point:

> But here a word of warning should be interposed. In estimating the social importance of this movement, we must be careful to discount the temporary and fictitious impetus it received from the economic slump of this period, and to remember that the literary world is no less prone to fashion than any others. Its desire at this point for a wider contact with the world as a whole coincided with the coming into fashion of Soviet Russia as a subject for intellectual discussion, and we shall be right in thinking that the connection between the two is not above suspicion. Already, as the slump shows signs in England of another feverish rise to another temporary boom, we note a slackening of Communist enthusiasm in poetry. . . .

Some part at least of our "poetic revival" and "Elizabethan age" is a purely political enthusiasm which varies according to the temperature of events and acquires a new poet as it might a new banner. Mr. Day Lewis complains that this enthusiasm has already subsided or at any rate turned away from its poets.

But there is also the enthusiasm of the poet to be considered, and again Mr. Lewis's analysis is useful:

> There does, he says, seem to be an increase in what we may call vitality. And it is this increased vitality which, I believe, has misled critics into positing a poetic revival. The vigour, the "optimism," the revolutionary fervour which undoubtedly are present in post-war poetry may only be reflections of the mood of a society recovering from the war. A poet is nothing if not sensitive to his environment: when he feels all round him the blood beginning to circulate again and the heart beating more strongly, it will be strange if this does not communicate itself to his verse. . . . But it is important that we distinguish between borrowed, adventitious energy in verse, and its natural energy.

The second anthology of "new signatures," *New Country*, was noticeably more Communist than the first, and rich in what Mr. Lewis calls "adventitious energy." And I think I am right in saying that Auden, Spender and Day Lewis have all become Communists in the course of their writings. Auden, at any rate, began with a rather stiff Conservatism.

The nine new poems which Mr. Spender has added to his second, "enlarged and revised," edition are for the most part political in theme. The volume now wears a more obvious Red than it did before. How much of this energy is "natural," and how much "adventitious"? A careful rereading of Mr. Spender may leave us still faintly puzzled on this point; some of the poems are sharply political, others (the majority) personal, while others again are a mixture of the two. The unevenness of Mr. Spender as a poet may well be due to the difficulty of making the joins. One of his best poems, for example, the last in the book, contains both his personal and his political creed.

> Eye, gazelle, delicate wanderer,
> Drinker of horizon's fluid line;
> Ear that suspends on a chord
> The spirit drinking timelessness;
> Touch, love, all senses. . . .

Compare this passage with what follows (seven lines later):

> No spirit seek here rest. But this: No man
> Shall hunger: Man shall spend equally.
> Our goal which we compel: Man shall be man.

And we shall see, I think, that it belongs to a different order of feeling, and of poetry, altogether. Mr. Spender looks distinctly odd, at times, as one of the leaders of a movement.

In *The Noise of History* and *Open the Sky* we have the rank and file at work. There can be no doubt of the value of "the movement" for *them*; they have a programme of poetics as well as politics, and with a fair level of skill they carry it out. Mr. Lehmann is the better, and the more individual, poet. A sympathetic reader will find both of them interesting, if hardly exciting.

To return to Mr. Day Lewis's *Hope for Poetry*. It is an admirable introduction to the group of young poets whose work I have been discussing; and Mr. Lewis's criticism is direct, personal and sensitive. In a series of brief chapters he discusses the poets who have affected him most: Hopkins, Owen, and T. S. Eliot; on each of these he has something fresh and distinctive to say. His remark, of Hopkins, for example, that he is an "unconscious revolutionary" in poetical technique is perfectly true. He adds that "his innovations are not due to a deliberate rebelling against the conventional technique of the time . . . but spring from a kind of innocent experimenting with words, as a child of genius might invent a new style of architecture while playing with bricks."

G. W. STONIER

## NEW NOVELS

**Men of Good Will.** By JULES ROMAINS. Translated by WARRE B. WELLS. BOOK V. THE PROUD OF HEART. BOOK VI. THE HUMBLE. *Lovat Dickson.* 7s. 6d. each.

**The Plains of Cement.** By PATRICK HAMILTON. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

**Condemned to Live.** By JOHANN RABENER. Translated by GEOFFREY DUNLOP. *Boriswood.* 8s. 6d.

**The Progress to the Lake.** By RICHARD HERON WARD. *Ivor Nicholson and Watson.* 7s. 6d.

**Sunday.** By BETTY MILLER. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

**Long Remember.** By MACKINLAY KANTOR. *Selwyn and Blount.* 7s. 6d.

**The Ninth of July.** By RONALD FRASER. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

To the poetry of modern metropolis, modern writers have shown themselves hitherto quite astonishingly insensible. The movement begins magnificently with Baudelaire. Living at a time when the modern city, as we understand it now, was first assuming a definite shape, when the old Paris was being destroyed and a new Paris—the gas-lit emporium of the Second Empire—being hacked out of a labyrinth of mediaeval streets, the author of *Tableaux Parisiens* saw the city no longer as a mere conglomeration of shops, dwelling-houses and churches, but as something that possessed an organic life of its own. The city was becoming mightier than its inhabitants; its existence was larger, deeper and more terrifying than any sum total of the human existences that it enclosed; and, an inveterate *flaneur*, clad in the weeds of a sepulchral dandyism, the poet—often accompanied by an almost equally great artist, Constantin Guys—would make midnight expeditions through the town that he had known since boyhood, watching its prostitutes, its beggars, the insolence of a crinolined hetaira and the abject crawling gait of an old woman, the blind man tapping his way down a deserted pavement and the crowded thoroughfares where dream and reality are confused.

Since Baudelaire's death, the city has been neglected. We have had many writers, it is true, who have visited the slums and the obscure middle-class suburbs, or have penetrated the vulgarity and noise of the *grands boulevards*; but, excepting always Mr. T. S. Eliot, very few modern writers have attempted to distil the essential poetry inherent in urban civilisation, which is so much drabber yet so much more dramatic than the old. Prosaic observers have outnumbered poetic *flaneurs*; and perhaps the greatest charm of M. Jules Romains' ambitious but now rather top-heavy chronicle is that we realise that, to compose such a book, the novelist must have wandered widely, felt deeply and listened with a sensitive and poetic ear to the deep, irregular pulsation of modern city life. This practice, too, may account for some of his shortcomings; Volumes Five and Six have now been added to *Men of Good Will* in its translated form, and the reader is beginning to ask himself whether the book has any real plan, whether M. Romains' method is not a trifle aimless, consisting, as it seems to do, of a mere exuberant proliferation of scenes, episodes and characters. Two fresh characters, l'Abbé Jeanne and an English journalist, Stephen Bartlett, are introduced to add their quota of complication to an already extremely complicated and elaborate story. The humility and poverty of the Bastides (befriended by the Abbé Jeanne) is paralleled by the arrogance and opulence of Sammécaud and his mistress, the comtesse de Champçenais; and there is a gruesome account of how Marie de Champçenais, with child by Sammécaud, visits a cheap abortionist and brings on a miscarriage during a local fête at her country house.

Many of these separate episodes are uncommonly absorbing; but, as I have suggested, it is the poetic atmosphere in which M. Romains manages to steep his fresco of urban life, coupled

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with the subtlety and delicacy he displays in the dissection of human motives, that makes *Men of Good Will* a book to read. Like M. Romains, though on a far more modest scale, Mr. Patrick Hamilton, author of *The Plains of Cement*, has done his best to capture the poetry that lurks amid asphalt, brick and stucco, and to unearth the fascination of obscure spirits caught in the jungle labyrinth of a modern industrial town. Ella, his heroine, is a barmaid; Mr. Eccles, who wishes to marry her, a type painfully familiar to frequenters of the English bar-parlour or tastefully furnished saloon-lounge, a well-informed, not unprosperous, semi-genteel middle-aged man, with the fund of repartee and commonplace that passes for polite conversation. Mr. Eccles is exquisitely and horribly life-like; Ella, too, is a charming and convincing personage; and the agonies inflicted on her by Master Eric, the publican's nephew, a "healthy yet loathsome little boy, with his green school-cap, sturdy body, bare chapped knees, and nauseatingly ruddy complexion," will evoke a responsive shudder from honest child-haters . . .

The triangular situation, created by Ella, Mr. Eccles—who has visions of "settling down"—and Bob, the good-looking barman, whom Ella loves in secret, is neatly and sympathetically constructed. With unusual skill, Mr. Hamilton draws out something of the beauty and mystery that is to be found, now and then, in the dingiest and poorest of London streets. His method is simple and unostentatious; and its only disadvantage is a faintly patronising humour of the kind that begins with Dickens and continues through a long series of Victorian and Edwardian Cockney novelists. . . . The impression left by the book is slight but refreshing. It is very "English"—just as English as the impression produced by Herr Rabener's *Condemned to Live* is distinctively and somewhat depressingly Teutonic. Here is adolescence as is least agreeable. Fedor Feuerhahn, son of a cashiered German officer and typical product of the post-War period, avenges his own intimate desperation by killing the vulgar and good-for-nothing woman who has betrayed him to human servitude. At great length Herr Rabener plunges his protagonist deeper and deeper into an all-enveloping darkness; the worthlessness of Fedor's mother is heavily and insistently laboured; and, though it would be impossible to deny the novel a certain quality of clumsy vigour, as a whole the narrative is conventional and not very interesting.

With Mr. Heron Ward, like a cork from a magnum of Colonial Clicquot, we bound up again towards the sunny playing-fields of a large English public school. For Mr. Ward, adolescence has its problems, but they are problems that soon fade away if frankly and courageously confronted. In a more modern vein, Lewis Olney has something of the intense yet unobtrusive manliness that distinguished Dean Farrar's never-to-be-forgotten Eric; and admirers of that unduly neglected hero will enjoy the passages in which Lewis and his best friend discuss questions of Christianity, sex and platonic love, and Grey informs Lewis, with quivering reticence, that his sister, whom he adores, has set up house with a man to whom she is not married. . . . The same class of readers—those who find it easier to laugh *at* modern novelists, than in their company—will appreciate *Sunday* by Miss Betty Miller, and may open their mental scrap-books to include the following paragraph, which describes the hero, a romantic and enigmatic biscuit-manufacturer, engaged in his early morning toilet:

> He flicked at his shoulders with a small dark clothes brush, and took from the stand his malacca cane with handle formed by an antelope's hoof, cloven. Then, with the cigarette still in his mouth, depending slightly on the greater fullness of the lower lip, he surveyed himself in the mirror. A well-formed head, slightly too small for the broad figure; eyes of a very curious pallid blue, disturbing, light, intense . . . He drew on a pair of lemon-coloured gloves: his wrists were slender, taut, nervous, as were his ankles, the neat virility of which black silk socks partially revealed.

The prose styles of Ronald Firbank and Miss Elinor Glyn have seldom been more happily and oddly married.

In conclusion, we travel to North and South America. *Long Remember* is a novel of the American Civil War; and Mr. MacKinlay Kantor has written an exceedingly vivid account of the battle of Gettysburg, as seen by a non-combatant, caught between the two armies. The narrative is perhaps a little over-dramatic; but the novelist provides a startling and exciting reconstruction of war at its worst, when the natural ferocity of human beings was still limited by the comparative inefficiency of death-dealing weapons. . . . *The Ninth of July* is a novel about the Argentine. Loose in texture, vague and elusive in its treatment, the book has a charm that it is difficult to analyse, for the hero himself and the minor characters are completely unreal. It is not to the characters, but to the spacious background against which they move, that this strange story owes its variety and interest.

PETER QUENNELL

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**Marlborough, His Life and Times.** By the RT. HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, C.H., M.P. Volume II. *Harrap.* 25s.

Mr. Churchill is not quite so combative in this volume as in its predecessor. He is dealing, not with John Churchill's slow, often interrupted, climb from obscurity, and with the dubious tales that have been told about it, but with the sudden emergence of the Duke of Marlborough as the first subject and the first soldier in Europe. His main business is not to make out a case, but to tell a story. Magnificently he does it. The "lay reader" to whose ear he pitches his tune is wooed with a concentrated ardour to which historians seldom rise. To give one instance only, not a single manoeuvre in the field is brought to his notice without its accompanying map or plan, specially drawn in bold outline for his benefit, to elucidate a text on which every care has already been lavished to make it clarity itself. There can be no excuse, except the sheer inability to read a whole book of 600 pages, for anyone, however dull, to remain ignorant of how, or vague as to why, Marlborough's wars were won. Once let him put himself in Mr. Churchill's hands and he can be confident of emerging from his course of treatment cured, as regards three years of history, of ignorance and vagueness for life.

True that no expenditure of energy in exposition, nor the utmost clarity in the enunciation of principles (and Mr. Churchill knows a great deal in a different way from most historians about the governing ideas both of war and of politics) and the elucidation of detail can give the captious pupil complete confidence in his mentor's judgment. It is still open to the doubter to question whether Mr. Churchill's Marlborough, splendidly commemorated as he will be when the great trilogy is completed, carefully as the Blenheim archives have been and are being searched for new

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material, sternly as previous historians are rebuked for their inaccuracy, prejudice and misrepresentation, is the real Marlborough or someone else. It would certainly be odd if he were not, for then it would not be the first time that the passionate loyalty of his own family has raised a monument to him which, if not a caricature, is at least a disguise, and the great Life, like the great Park at Blenheim, would have failed of its full and desired effect by protesting too much.

Anyhow, Mr. Churchill's Marlborough is a credit to humanity. "His mind was a weighing machine for practical affairs as perfect as has ever been known. Infallibility is not for mortals. It is enough to say that no one could do more than he could or try harder and more continuously." All this effort and all this skill were devoted to the service of the Queen. He wrestled with the inconceivably stupid Dutch, with jealous and embittered rivals and enemies at home, with every obstacle that treachery, faction and folly could put in his path, not for fame, nor for profit, but out of pure loyalty and patriotism. Ambition he had, and the knowledge that for his great role in history only he was fit, but it was an ambition which never mastered him, which he was always ready to waive at the Queen's command or in her service. When he told Sarah, as he often did, that his greatest wish was to retire with her to a life of leisure and domestic felicity on his estates, he was perfectly sincere.

To claim such a stature for any human being is to challenge disagreement. There will be those who think that Mr. Churchill, though he does full justice to Marlborough's immediate circle and is particularly happy in his characterisation of Queen Anne with her "warm heart and cunning mind," is much less than fair both to the Dutch and to the Tory opposition. Even the "lay reader" will wonder whether either can have been quite as criminally stupid as both appear, and perhaps some of Marlborough's godlike patience with them may have been just a sensible man's understanding of their point of view. There will be others whose Marlborough, with all, or nearly all, the personal courage (no mean attribute), the clear-headedness and the skill in negotiation which Mr. Churchill gives him, has about him, too, quite a spice of human frailty. Did he always mean what he said, even when he was writing to Sarah? It would make him more interesting, though less godlike, if he did not.

KENNETH BELL

## LONDON'S INDUSTRIES

**The New Survey of London Life and Labour. Vol. VIII. London Industries. III.** *King.* 17*s.* 6*d.*

With this volume the survey of London industries comes to an end, having covered about four-fifths of the entire occupied population of Greater London. The final instalment includes land transport, fine metal and instrument trades, catering, electricity, gas and water and clerical work. It is a miscellaneous collection, and the authors have not attempted, as they did in the case of the social survey, to collate and summarise the results for the whole area. In fact, this would be a very difficult thing to do. On certain points comparisons and, possibly, generalisations could be made—for instance, wages, hours, age and sex distribution, apprenticeship or other training, Trade Union organisation, mechanisation and its effects. The Director's Introduction attempts a brief summary along those lines for this volume, but there is no statistical tabulation. The statistics of industry, however, offer less scope than those of social conditions for expert analysis. Social statistics need to be manipulated before the picture they can be made to draw becomes clear to the reader. The significance of industrial statistics is more obvious, and the reader, passing quickly beyond the question, "What facts do these figures indicate?" asks at once, "For what reasons are these facts so?" Immediately he realises that the search for the answer would lead him far outside London. An explanation, for example, of the difference between working conditions or labour organisation in rail and road transport cannot be arrived at in terms of London only.

This is probably the main reason why one is left at the end of this volume with a feeling of unsatisfied hunger. The strong meat of solved problems, the sauce piquante of intelligent hypothesis, are missing from the menu. The information is often "underdone" and lacks sharpness of flavour. One is tempted to say that the statistics are "under-cooked." One or two of the dishes —that is to say, of the sub-sections—can only be described as slops, so large is the percentage of water in their composition. A sentence like the following ought not to appear in a scientific

work: "For some reason peculiar to itself, the rate of labour turnover in this trade is high." Why "peculiar to itself"? It sounds most improbable. It is true that the author then attempts an explanation, but it reads like a casual suggestion rather than the result of a careful study of the whole position. Or if we turn to transport, for instance, several questions will occur to us which do not get answered, although the answers are probably quite simple. Why have the railway companies stuck so long to horse-vans? Since relatively so few bus and tram conductors are over fifty, what becomes of them at that age? There were 2,700 fewer licensed cabs in London in 1932 than in 1894. But the numbers had been rising since the war. With what facts should this fall be correlated, and when exactly did it occur? Is there any control of the distribution of taxis over the London area, or is it left to free competition, and how does it work out? Do all the porters at a terminus get an equal chance for the "plums" of the boat-trains? And so forth.

Nevertheless, the book gives us a valuable picture of the changes since Charles Booth's day. And it is rich in interesting and unexpected pieces of information. The description of the organisation of a jeweller's workshop, where hands are washed into a special sink to catch the gold, is fascinating. The classification of taxi-drivers yields the rather surprising result that two-thirds of them are owner-drivers. It is diverting to learn that it takes ten years to become an expert furniture remover, while "foremen removers are born to the profession and cannot be made"; that, in the catering trade, the smaller the boy the better his chance of getting a job as a page; and that the House of Commons waiters migrate *en bloc* to Weston-super-Mare in the summer recess.

One gets the definite impression that wages and hours are now, as compared with Booth's day, reasonably standardised (except that the catering trades present a chaotic picture of long and irregular hours, low and incalculable earnings, and a lamentable lack of consideration for the comfort and convenience of the employees). It is striking, too, that the great majority of the workers in the industries covered by this volume get an annual holiday, a week or a fortnight and sometimes more, on full pay. This custom is established alike in highly organised trades, e.g. transport (excluding taxi-drivers and chauffeurs), among the weakly organised but semi-professional body of clerks, and in catering, which is also weakly organised, but has some statutory protection. The inference is that the cause of the custom varies.

The ineffectiveness of Trade Union organisation in some of these industries is very striking. Even more ineffective are the provisions for apprenticeship. The jewellers, for instance, have an elaborate agreement as to the conditions of apprenticeship, but there are practically no apprentices. But in fact recruitment and training are provided for in other ways, and the Survey might, perhaps, have taken rather more care to estimate their value. Mechanisation has gone steadily on, and it is surprising to learn how recent are some of the developments, especially in the metal trades and the electricity and gas services. Why has London never adopted machinery for making watches? Only 6 per cent. of the employees of the electricity, gas and water works are women. Among clerks the percentage rises from 11 in transport, *via* public services (29), and banking (37), to industry and commerce (47). Is there an economic reason for this, or is it simply a scale of diminishing conservatism?

T. H. MARSHALL

## THE HISTORY OF INDIA

**The Cambridge Shorter History of India.** By J. ALLAN, SIR WOLSELEY HAIG, H. H. DODWELL. *Cambridge University Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Here is a book to break the heart of a conscientious reviewer. From many points of view it deserves nothing but praise. It is a solid honest piece of work, well printed, well indexed, and remarkably cheap. We are even given quantitative marks for all Indian names, an unnecessary elaboration which has introduced a few small slips into a book which is otherwise a model of accurate scholarship. In something over 300,000 words the authors trace the history of India from Vedic times until 1919. Incidentally this is becoming the conventional date for ending histories of India, just as for two generations English histories usually stopped at 1837. Neither date really marked the end of an epoch. Perhaps the former is meant to conjure up a picture of England at last


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deciding to make an honest woman of India, and all ending happily with church bells, and the Montagu reforms. Actually the year 1919 was the very centre of a period of rapid transition. Possibly it is chosen to save the historians from having to mention Amritsar, or enter that libel-strewn field of controversy, but in that case it would be better to stop at 1917, before the revival of political activity towards the end of the war.

Returning to the first two parts of the book, *Ancient India* and *Muslim India*, it must be confessed that the effect of this history is depressing. It confirms the suspicion that no one but the specialist will ever read Indian history. Was there nothing in these earlier centuries except the rise and fall of minor dynasties, interspersed with battles, assassinations, and the sack of ancient cities? Here are paragraphs taken at random from each part.

> Towards the end of the reign of Pulakesin, the Pallavas avenged their early reverses. Narasimhavarman I, having won a series of victories over his immediate neighbours, proceeded to attack the Chālukyas. He routed Pulakesin in a series of battles and destroyed his capital, in memory of which achievement he assumed the title "Vātāpikonde," "taker of Vātāpi." After the downfall of Pulakesin II about 642, there seems to have been an interregnum of some ten years.
>
> Nasir Khān of Khāndesh died in 1437, and was succeeded by his son, Adil Khān I, who died in 1441, and was succeeded by his son, Mubārak Khān I, and in 1442 Ahmad I of Gujerāt, having failed to restore Mas'ūd to the throne of Malwa, died, and was succeeded by his son Muhammad I, known as Karim. Ahmad had built, on the site of Asāwal, a city which he named Ahmadābād, and which took the place of Anhilwar as the capital of Gujerāt.

When it is remembered that some of these events have to be repeated two or three times, as they reappear in the accounts of different dynasties, is it unfair to suggest this kind of history is totally unreadable for anyone except the professional historian? Occasionally a name may recall memories to Indians or to those who have spent some time in India. The reviewer happens to have spent some days at Vatapi, now the *taluka* town of Badami, with a few temples, lost in prickly pear and undergrowth, as the only sign of its former importance. Ahmadabad may suggest a textile town, or Mr. Gandhi and his *ashram*, but this is only fortuitous relief. The normal mind is incapable of following page after page, crammed with names of which ninety-nine out of every hundred are utterly unknown. Yet through both these earlier periods there were civilisations as well as dynasties which waxed and waned, there were religious movements, literature and folk-lore. To these Mr. Allan gives some recognition, but Sir Wolseley Haig will have none of them. Kalidasa receives some mention, but not Kabir.

The third part of the book, dealing with "British India," is by far the longest, and also the most readable. Like everything which Professor Dodwell writes, it is illuminated by an easy style and a thorough knowledge of the subject. It is, of course, "Civil Service History." After the first few unruly decades, the Englishman in authority and on the spot is nearly always right. The few Indians who drift into the picture are generally—in the school phrase—"sent up for bad" rather than "sent up for good." The English politicians who take any hand in Indian affairs are an equally sad lot. Sometimes when the European community obviously behaves badly, as about the Ilbert Bill, it is necessary to chide gently "the indigo and tea-planters," but the Government servant, military or civil, is above criticism. Faithful to this point of view Professor Dodwell gives an entirely one-sided picture of the Mutiny and its consequences, commends Lord Lytton's aggressive policy in Afghanistan and Lord Curzon's in Tibet, and assumes that advanced Indian opinion "is reluctant to defend itself in an arena where rhetoric and invective would be idle weapons." It is a possible way of looking at the Indian question, and the fact that a reviewer thoroughly disagrees with this standpoint must not prevent him from commending a very valuable piece of work.

G. T. GARRATT

## POWDER BARRELS OF EUROPE

**Crisis in Europe.** By GEORGE SLOCOMBE. *Selwyn and Blount.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Slocombe begins his book by quoting a cynical remark of Clemenceau: "Peace is merely war continued in another form." It is an apt text for his tale of Europe since 1918 and the crisis of to-day. The great jerry-built edifice, which was set up so laboriously sixteen years ago, is crumbling away. The old jealousies and hates and fears are still alive, and new ones have emerged. Nationalism, political and economic, is rampant. The League of Nations, if it has not hopelessly failed, has been a grievous disappointment. Disarmament has become rearmament. Safety is sought in alliances. Fascism has steam-rollered democracy. And over all looms the spectre of Hitlerism—the Nemesis that the makers and guardians of the Treaties have brought upon themselves by their fatuous treatment of Germany. All this is familiar enough, and Mr. Slocombe does not waste much time in lamenting the errors of the past; his concern is with the present and the future. On certain points his views are open to question. Is he right in treating the enmity between France and Germany as ineradicable as he seems to do—since there is "a profound and fatal incompatibility of temperament between the French and the German nations"? Is it true that "the real conflict between France and Italy is one of prestige"? And does he interpret Polish policy correctly when he says that "it is unlikely that, in a new military crisis in Europe, France and Poland will be found on any but the same side"?

But in general, in the tour on which he takes us round the powder barrels of the Continent, Mr. Slocombe is an able guide. He discusses, with knowledge and without sentimentalism or sensationalism, the chances of explosions and their probable effects. He ventures on no confident prophecy, but his warnings are none the less impressive for that. The danger that threatens from half a dozen different quarters is, as we know, constantly shifting in its urgency. Once it was the Corridor, then Austria; to-day it is in Jugoslavia, presently it will be in the Saar. But the shift does not mean that any of the problems is solved. The accommodation between Germany and Poland over Danzig can only be regarded, as Mr. Slocombe says, as a truce. The passing of the storm that followed the murder of Dollfuss has not settled the Austrian question; nor, if the murder of King Alexander leaves the peace unbroken, will the Dalmatian question, or any other Balkan question, be nearer settlement.

The root of the trouble, as Mr. Slocombe diagnoses it, lies where it has always lain, in the Treaties. The Treaties have crumbled, but the vanquished States (with the single exception of Turkey) are still confined in the ruins—mocking the victors, to be sure, by failing to pay their debts or by arming themselves, but clamouring and intriguing perpetually for their lost terri-

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tories. What is to be done, then? It is impossible to maintain the *status quo* indefinitely; Nazi Germany has at last made that clear to everyone. The choice before us, therefore, seems to be treaty revision or war—not war to-morrow or next year, but when Germany is ready, with the help of other discontented States which she may expect to attract to her side, to embark on the campaign of revenge and reconquest. But here Mr. Slocombe confronts us with an appalling dilemma. No revision means war. But revision also means war; for to the Little Entente States revision would spell such a dismemberment that they would die in the last ditch to prevent it. Dr. Benes and M. Titulescu both gave plain notice of that when Mussolini's Four Power Pact project was before them. Nor presumably would Poland, if her acquisitions were threatened, relinquish them without a struggle.

Is there any way of escape from this predicament? Mr. Slocombe suggests a general European Peace Conference, in which the victors and the vanquished will sit on terms of equality, to hammer out a scheme of "revision by consent," and so lay the foundations of the "United States of Europe." But that is surely a counsel of perfection. Is there a ghost of a chance, at present or in any near future, even of the assembling of such a conference, let alone of its reaching agreement? And the "United States of Europe" will be a dream while the nations are divided not merely by their national frontiers, but by the conflict of vital principles—democracy, Fascism, Socialism. That conflict Mr. Slocombe discusses, indeed; but he decides—far too easily, it seems to me—that it is not a serious obstacle to his hopes. Few of us are resigned to the inevitability of war. We cling to the belief that, if war can be staved off long enough, methods will be found of peaceful revision, wholesale or, more likely, piecemeal. But, for the moment, it is vain for Mr. Slocombe to say, like Old Bill: "If yer know of a better 'ole, we'll go to it." The trouble is that his 'ole is not an 'ole at all.

C. M. LLOYD

# Week-end Competitions

## No. 241

**Set by Winifred Holtby**

Miss Rose Macaulay has just composed an anthology representing the Minor Pleasures of Life. Competitors are asked to compile a pocket anthology of six quotations from well-known authors, representing six of the Minor Exasperations of Life. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best entries.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, November 2nd.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION 239

**Set by Raymond Mortimer**

Four years ago, Mr. Francis Birrell and Mr. F. L. Lucas compiled an anthology called *The Art of Dying*, in which they collected the last words of many famous personages. The best of these sayings were short, a touch ironic (consciously or unconsciously) and characteristic of the speaker, often showing the ruling passion strong in death. Unfortunately, the last words of many of the most interesting persons have been either uninteresting or unrecorded. This suggests that the eminent should in good time prepare an appropriate sentence with which to make their valediction. A First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best suggestion of last words for any three of the following characters: Columbus, Pope Alexander VI, Marlowe, Sir Thomas Browne, Bishop Berkeley, Gibbon, Boswell, Catherine the Great, Horace Walpole, Jane Austen, The Duke of Wellington, Karl Marx, Macaulay, Ruskin, Dr. Bowdler, Mrs. Eddy, Napoleon III, W. G. Grace, Queen Victoria, Cézanne, Mr. Balfour, Proust, Freud, Al Capone, Einstein, Rockefeller, Hitler, and Mae West.

**Report by Raymond Mortimer**

I sincerely congratulate myself on having set this competition, for the entries have been many and in my opinion brilliant. Indeed, I fancy I may have invented a new paper-game. I am rather surprised by the comparative popularity of the different celebrities—Mae West was much the most popular, followed by Hitler, W. G. Grace, Queen Victoria and Dr. Bowdler. Poor Macaulay attracted the notice of only one competitor, Cézanne only of two. There were a number of entries for Marx and Rockefeller, but none that I liked—nobody seems to have remembered that the latter is a pious Baptist. Also it is a mistake to make him (or Mrs. Eddy) use the language appropriate to Mr. Capone. Horace Walpole and Gibbon proved very uninspiring, and there was no reference to the circumstances of Marlowe's end. For Mae West I expected and received "Come down and see me some time" from many competitors, but I was surprised that almost as many were content to leave the original "come up" unaltered. We live in a lax and godless age. Of all in my list the one I most wanted Last Words for was Miss Austen, but no one remembered the important place occupied in her world by clergymen. If she had been unable to call Mr. Tilney to her deathbed, I am convinced that her sense of propriety would have obliged her to summon Mr. Elton or Mr. Collins. Here is a selection of the best single "parting shots": there were many others almost as good:

ALEXANDER VI: As flesh I have failed in all, but O Christ, thou knowest—I have held fast the keys! (W. Stafford.)
What shall I promise thee, O Death? And where is Cesare's sword? (J. Anderson.)
O aeternitas! (W. Bliss.)

SIR THOMAS BROWNE: The time is now come for this flesh to earn burial. (Alice Herbert.)
Now I shall know what song the Sirens sang. (W. Bliss.)
Being now well entered upon the ultramundane transit and pathway to eternity, I might knowingly dilate and speak at large upon matters that have baffled former speculations, were it not that by the process of expiration I am almost dumbed, and scarcely have breath to whisper *morior*. (S. E. R. A.)

BERKELEY: Deus me percipiet. (Peter Hadley.)

BOSWELL: I believe, if I could again visit Corsica, I might recover. (G. Linfoot.)
I'm coming, Sir. (Rev. A. S. Wilson.)

JANE AUSTEN: I wish I had someone to smile with me. (W. Bliss.)

DR. BOWDLER: I have purged. (M. R. Ridley.)
I have never re-read an obscene passage. (E. V. Warne.)
Now for a rest—I *hope*. (J. Hall.)
Had I but lived to purify the Scriptures! (Lester Ralph.)

WELLINGTON: Night . . . and Blucher? (Guy Innes.)

W. G. GRACE: Out? Nonsense! (Dolly Gray.)
I still say I'm not out. (Guy Hadley.)
I refuse to go out! (D. Hawson.)

MRS. EDDY: Impossible! (L. V. Upward.)
(Magdalen Fillgrave's "Send for a doctor" should be "Send for the doctor," as history records that Mrs. Eddy had a regular medical attendant.)

QUEEN VICTORIA: I pray God protect my stricken country. (Cynic.)
When I am gone, Bertie, be kind to Willie. (A. L. Caldwell.)

MR. BALFOUR: There are excellent reasons why I should postpone this pressing appointment. (W. Farrell.)
So this is Death! (Miss Mayhew.)

HITLER: O God of Abraham, I take it all back. (S. W. Green.)
Ich mit Uns! (G. Mann and T. H. Somervell.)
I raise both arms. (A. R. Thomas.)
Will there be Roehm for me in Heaven? (W. P. Barrett.)

But one brilliant shot was not enough, I wanted three Bulls. (I have quoted three of William Bliss's, but they were in separate lists.) I eventually picked the following as the best complete lists, from which to choose the winner. (Waverley, William Laslett and J. Jukes also reached a very high level.)

BERKELEY: What matter, my friends, that I must leave you? There is no matter.

WELLINGTON: It has been a nice thing between Death and me, a damned near run thing: but he has me licked, by God.

MR. BALFOUR: I feel some doubt as to whether, even in the unknown avenue which I am about to explore, all convictions will be finally settled. (E. W. Fordham.)

NAPOLEON III: Enfin, lui aussi il a gâché sa vie.

CÉZANNE: Devoir laisser ma Provence aux imbéciles!

EINSTEIN: . . . to an observer on the earth, my clock will appear to have stopped. (Clarence.)

Then three separate sets by one competitor:

(*a*) COLUMBUS: Why "America"?
BERKELEY: Mens agitat molem.
DR. BOWDLER: Macbeth: Three, One, Twenty-nine, Delete "bloody."

(*b*) MAE WEST: Turn off that Red Light.
MR. BALFOUR: The Play's over—I had a good seat.
DR. BOWDLER: Macbeth: Three, One, Twenty-nine, Delete "bloody."

(*c*) QUEEN VICTORIA: I'm getting dizzy.
WELLINGTON: No better than his Marshals, after all.
AL CAPONE: The last Bump. (M. Holland.)

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*by ALEXANDER WERTH*

*(Press Correspondent in Paris)*

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CÉZANNE: Ma soeur, c'est la première fois que je meurs—aide-moi.
PROUST: Je demande pardon a son Altesse, si je suis forcé de rompre cet entretien, si intéressant, avec elle—c'est parceque, malheureusement, je suis obligé de . . . mourir.
HITLER: Kommt Walküren! Führt mich in Walhall! (Eremita.)
NAPOLEON III Napoléon premier avait deux idées—Napoléon et la France; moi, j'avais trois—Napoléon, la France, et l'humanité.
PROUST: Dites a Madame de Guermantes que je regrette infiniment que je ne crois pas que je puisse dîner chez elle ce soir.
HITLER: Es träumte mir, ich wär ein Junker und der Kaiser von Deutschland—du willst es nicht sagen? (H. C. Riddell.)

Between these I have found it almost impossible to decide. Eremita and H. C. Riddell each have one weak shot; E. W. Fordham and M. Holland (*a* and *b*) are consistently good, but do not rise to the heights of Eremita's Cézanne and H. C. Riddell's Hitler. Eremita's Proust is even better than H. C. Riddell's, but her Hitler is feeble, so feeble indeed, that I sadly put her out of the running. H. C. Riddell's Napoleon III is very much inferior to Clarence's, but I consider his Hitler the most imaginative suggestion that I have received, and I recommend him for the First Prize. The Second Prize must be divided, I think, between Michael Holland and Michael Holland. To E. W. Fordham and Clarence I can offer only my admiration and my apologies for the injustice I may have done them. "It has been a nice thing . . . a damned near run thing," and the difficulty of deciding has kept me awake at night.

## CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 96.—SYBIL

"I've noticed such a funny thing about our ages," said my young mathematical friend, Sybil.

"Yes?" said I. "What's that?"

"Why," said Sybil, "the sum of our ages—my sisters' and mine—at the date when we first came to this village, added to the sum of our ages at the present date, gives a total of exactly 100."

"Remarkable," said I, politely.

"But that's not all," said Sybil. "I've found out three things more. (1) Our ages are in arithmetical progression. (2) The ages of the two youngest of us to-day are respectively the same as the ages of the two eldest when we first came to this village. And (3)—oddest thing of all—all our ages are odd."

*How old are Sybil and her sisters?*

PROBLEM 94.—INTELLIGENCE TESTS

Let there be $n$ tests and $p$ girls participating.

Then the number of pence paid out in respect of each test
$= 17 - (p - 1)$
$= 18 - p.$

Now altogether 360 pence are paid out,
*i.e.* $(18 - p)\,n = 360.$

We get then the following values:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | $p = 3$ | $n = 24$ |
| 2. | $p = 6$ | $n = 30$ |
| 3. | $p = 8$ | $n = 36$ |
| 4. | $p = 10$ | $n = 45$ |
| 5. | $p = 12$ | $n = 60$ |
| 6. | $p = 15$ | $n = 120$ |
| 7. | $p = 16$ | $n = 180$ |
| 8. | $p = 17$ | $n = 360$ |

But of these:

1 is inadmissible ∵ the maximum loss is 6*d.*
2 is inadmissible ∵ the maximum loss is 1*s.*
3 is inadmissible ∵ the maximum loss is 1*s.* 6*d.*

4 and 5 are inadmissible ∵ in these cases it would not be possible for each girl to win a different number.

7 and 8 are inadmissible ∵ the total number of tests is less than 168.

Hence there were 15 participants and 120 tests, the numbers won being 1, 2, 3 . . . 15 respectively.

*Hence Joy won 5 tests.* She received $5 \times 17d. = 7s.\ 1d.$ and paid out $115d. = 9s.\ 7d.$, or on balance, 2*s.* 6*d.*

PROBLEM 93

A set of Low's cartoons goes to G. F. Thorold, 11 Pelham Place, S.W.7.

*Eight* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

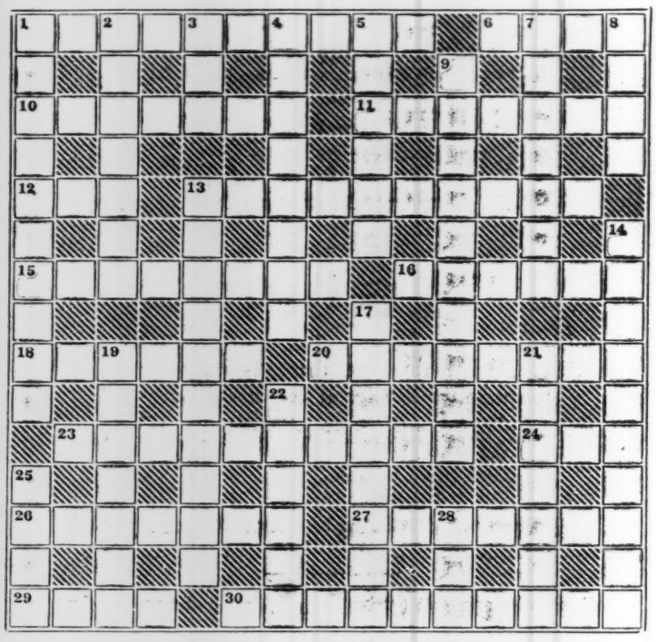
A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution. CALIBAN

## WEEK-END CROSSWORD 242

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Lt.-Col. H. P. Carwood, 38 Hurlingham Court, S.W.6

ACROSS.

1. Up Jenkins requires this sort of honesty.
6. An answering request.
10. Where to get written information off the tree of knowledge?
11. You can eat the handkerchief if you remove the copper.
12. A prophet's son.
13. Dislocation in the meat trade.
15. Hang about that is in underclothes.
16. Bustle to a Bolshy.
18. A Writer to the Signet holds the tiller.
20. Put me on to fruit.
23. Zoological investment to give biggest dividend.
24. Toothsome adhesive.
26. Break a lance in the south east.
27. Uplift.
29. One gets fed up in a place in so hopeless a muddle.
30. Ate men while a saint stood by each side.

DOWN.

1. Permits to go round the Hall next Thursday.
2. Talk on about comparative relations.
3. Wandering author.
4. Bathing tents are often provided to discourage those who would so go ahead.
5. Repulse concerning a singular regiment.
7. You would expect this organist to have left his mark.
8. When on the main it is another kind of fruit.
9. Punctuality in a coming period.
13. Unbiased with a splitting head?
14. They are not moved when the sergeant shouts "Form fours."
17. "The world is still deceiv'd with ——."
19. Written for those who incurably lie.
21. Inherent description of next year's wheat.
22. Agreement the invoice should have with the goods.
25. Adverse ones are sweet.
28. Woody part of 18.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | P | I | C | K | A | N | D | S | P | A | N | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| P | ■ | M | ■ | N | ■ | O | ■ | A | ■ | D | ■ | B | ■ | ■ |
| A | P | P | L | E | B | Y | ■ | L | E | A | G | U | E | ■ |
| R | ■ | O | ■ | E | ■ | A | ■ | A | ■ | M | ■ | R | ■ | F |
| K | N | U | T | ■ | O | D | O | N | T | A | L | G | I | A |
| I | ■ | N | ■ | C | ■ | E | ■ | I | ■ | N | ■ | L | ■ | S |
| N | O | D | U | L | E | S | ■ | O | D | D | M | E | N | T |
| G | ■ | ■ | ■ | O | ■ | ■ | ■ | E | ■ | ■ | ■ | A | ■ | ■ |
| P | L | A | U | D | I | T | ■ | E | N | V | I | R | O | N |
| L | ■ | L | ■ | H | ■ | R | ■ | I | ■ | E | ■ | U | ■ | D |
| U | R | A | N | O | M | E | T | R | Y | ■ | A | B | E | L |
| G | ■ | U | ■ | P | ■ | S | ■ | E | ■ | F | ■ | I | ■ | O |
| ■ | A | D | E | P | T | S | ■ | A | J | A | C | C | I | O |
| ■ | ■ | A | ■ | E | ■ | E | ■ | N | ■ | S | ■ | O | ■ | S |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | P | R | E | S | E | N | T | T | E | N | S | E |

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44

# THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE GOLD-BLOC ON THE RUN—REACTION IN KAFFIRS—FINANCE SHARES—THE BANKERS' AGREEMENT—WALL STREET

THE solemn decision of the European "gold-bloc" countries to increase by 10 per cent. the volume of trade with each other was the biggest laugh of their recent conference at Brussels. A month ago, when they were discussing at Geneva their common plight, I suggested that it only remained for them to realise the impossibility of deflating their costs sufficiently to restore their competitive position. Tariffs, indirect taxation, semi-fixed charges, and wages, make their costs of production so rigid that "deflation" will never work out their salvation. But what can the latest scheme do except to *increase* costs of production? Nothing is said about enlarging the total volume of "gold-bloc" trade by the granting of international loans. I conclude, therefore, that a 10 per cent. increase in "intra-gold-bloc" trade means an increase at the expense of some other bloc, and if it is at the expense of the off-gold bloc, it means that the on-gold countries will buy from each other certain goods which they could buy more cheaply elsewhere. True, the Conference merely decided to start bilateral negotiations for a 10 per cent. increase in trade and to bring such negotiations to a successful conclusion within a year, but it is something to know that ultimately the gold-bloc countries do intend to increase their costs; that is, to extinguish completely their trade with everyone except themselves. Their defence of the gold standard has become suicidal, but nothing short of an external (political) or internal (social) crisis will now force them to abandon gold or devalue their currencies. Belgium is the weak link, but France will probably protect her to the end. Meanwhile, in spite of the Gold Conference, the franc has been weakening in terms of sterling. The seasonal trade pressure on sterling has probably subsided (earlier than usual), so that it would be surprising not to see sterling from now till December recover some of its lost ground. We must not forget that speculative capital movements dwarf normal trade transactions in the exchanges. If any sort of a political crisis develops in Europe, the flight into sterling will probably be on a grand scale. It has in part begun. There was heavy forward selling of francs this week in the City in intelligent anticipation of the flight to come.

* * *

The fall in the sterling price of gold following on the rise in sterling is not the only reason for the set-back in the Kaffir market. Weak or stale "bull" positions are being liquidated, partly because carry-over facilities are becoming restricted, partly because the recent policy of mining lower-grade ore as the sterling price of gold advanced has left the speculative investors nothing to "go for" in the way of bumper profits, partly because the flotation of some of the new Far Eastern properties—Spaarwater, Vlakfontein, etc.—for which the speculators are waiting, has been unduly delayed. The Kaffir market, in fact, had worked itself up into an unhealthy, over-bought position. Some of the non-dividend-paying, speculative shares have now suffered a pretty severe fall, as the following table indicates :—

| | Lowest Price 1934. | Highest Price. | Present Price. | Producing Probably in. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grootvlei, £1 .. .. .. | 76/6 | 160/– | 145/– | 1938 |
| South African Land (Sallies), 3/6 .. .. .. .. | 17/3 | 71/3 | 58/9 | 1938 |
| Vogelstruisbult, 10/– .. | 37/6 | 55/7½ | 42/6 | 1939 |
| East Rand Consolidated, 5/–.. | 14/6 | 34/3 | 27/– | 1938/9 |
| New Kleinfontein, £1 .. | 29/3 | 80/– | 58/9 | * |

* Producing from old section, but the new Apex section will probably start production in 1936.

A disappointing quarterly report on New Kleinfontein was the signal for the recent shake-out. When the price of a mining share depends so much on great expectations, it is particularly vulnerable to adverse news and rumours.

* * *

Let us examine the rumours which have been disturbing the gold share market. There have been rumours of the impending collapse of speculative positions in South Africa where the extent of the gambling in unproved mining leases and in real estate generally has been greatly exercising the banks. This may come, but there is no present sign of a serious crash. There have also been rumours that the gold-bloc will shortly suspend the gold standard and that if the United States turn out to be the last country on gold, Mr. Roosevelt will suspend the buying of gold and leave the London bullion market to the gold hoarders. What would happen if no Central Bank were to buy gold? The South African Government would probably suspend shipments of gold and the supply of gold in the London market would then depend upon the arrival of dehoarded gold from India and the release of private hoards in London. Would hoarders unload their gold in a panic if no Central Banks were buying? They might, but in all probability they would argue that with every currency divorced from gold they would be safer in gold than in anything else and would wait patiently for the eventual stabilisation. There might even be a big scramble for gold. Now that Mr. Roosevelt has written up the statutory price of American gold, it is not likely that Great Britain will write down the present sterling market price of around 140/–, that is, if commodity prices are not much higher than they are to-day. While I shall always regard the monetary demand for gold as an extravagance and a superstition, I see no likelihood of any nation abandoning the gold standard for ever, except possibly Sweden.

* * *

When a severe reaction occurs in the Kaffir market, the investor should not miss the opportunity of acquiring the shares of the finance companies whose risks are well distributed among dividend-paying and developing gold mines. Union Corporation has recently increased its interim dividend from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* and the market is now estimating a final dividend of 5*s.*, making 7*s.* 6*d.* for the year, or 60 per cent. The next table shows the dividend yields obtainable on Union Corporation and three other finance holding companies.

| | Highest Price 1934. | Present Price. | Estimated Dividend. | * Dividend Yield %. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union Corporation, 12/6 | 7–9/16 | 6⅞ | 60% | £5 11 9 |
| Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, £1 .. | 4–3/16 | 3⅜ | 25% | 7 1 0 |
| Central Mining, £8 .. | 22⅜ | 20⅜ | 15% | 6 8 3 |
| Johannesburg Consolidated, £1 .. .. | 70/6 | 64/6 | 20% | 6 19 9 |

* Equivalent gross yield after allowing for Dominion Income Tax relief.

* * *

The gilt-edged market has been strong with good reason. The joint stock banks are precipitating a fresh fall in short-term interest rates. It may shock my readers to learn that bankers cannot be trusted to observe a "gentlemen's" agreement, but it is the truth. Since September, 1933, a so-called gentlemen's agreement has existed between four of the joint stock banks to quote a minimum buying rate for bills. The result was that they obtained fewer bills. At the end of last week the Midland Bank apparently decided that this could not continue. It lowered its buying rate for maturities up to the end of December from $\frac{11}{16}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ per cent. The National Provincial and the Westminster have followed suit. This "ratting" on the part of the Midland may be welcomed as a thoroughly sound and social move. It will probably lead to a substantial fall in Treasury bill rates and exercise a downward pull upon the long-term rate of interest. If the Midland would now do a little "ratting" in the matter of other banking conventions, that is, if it would exceed the conventional ratio of investments plus advances to deposits by buying more Government securities, we should see another helpful boom in the gilt-edged market and give a further stimulus to industrial borrowing. Money cannot be too cheap to sustain a trade revival.

* * *

A correspondent considers that I have been inconsistent in my attitude to Wall Street. On September 8th I anticipated a slump and later on chided a Stock Exchange firm for taking an unreasonably alarmist view of the American outlook. There was, in fact, a fall in Wall Street up till the middle of September and the likelihood of a serious break, but on September 29th I was compelled to observe the signs of a "move to the right" on the part of the Roosevelt administration (witness the reform of the N.R.A. and the strict avoidance of any pro-labour action in the strikes). This has, I confess, caused me to modify my views. I am tempted to suspect that there has been a "new deal" between Roosevelt and the bankers—Roosevelt promising not to upset business confidence by interfering too much with profit-making and the bankers undertaking to subscribe to any amount of Government bonds this winter. Some brave City speculators are already selling British industrials to gamble in American.

October 27, 1934

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SUPPLEMENT SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1934

# A Conversation Between STALIN AND WELLS

[The following is the verbatim record of the conversation between Stalin and H. G. Wells during the latter's recent visit to Moscow. It brings into sharp contrast the views of two men who represent rival schools of socialist thought. Their difference is on the question of method rather than of objective. What is the right attitude for a Socialist to take towards the bourgeoisie and the "class war"? The conversation ends with a reference to the Soviet Writers' Congress then about to be held. Mr. Wells appends, with a comment on freedom of expression in Russia, the letter, so far unanswered, which he addressed to the Soviet Writers' Congress on behalf of the P.E.N. Club.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WELLS: I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Stalin, for agreeing to see me. I was in the United States recently. I had a long conversation with President Roosevelt and tried to ascertain what his leading ideas were. Now I have come to you to ask you what you are doing to change the world.

STALIN: Not so very much.

WELLS: I wander around the world as a common man and, as a common man, observe what is going on around me.

STALIN: Important public men like yourself are not "common men." Of course, history alone can show how important this or that public man has been; at all events you do not look at the world as a "common man."

WELLS: I am not pretending humility. What I mean is that I try to see the world through the eyes of the common man and not as a party politician or a responsible administrator. My visit to the United States excited my mind. The old financial world there is collapsing; the economic life of the country is being reorganised on new lines. Lenin said: "We must learn to do business," learn this from the capitalists. To-day the capitalists have to learn from you, to grasp the spirit of Socialism. It seems to me that what is taking place in the United States is a profound reorganisation, the creation of planned, that is, socialist economy. You and Roosevelt begin from two different starting points. But is there not a relation in ideas, a kinship of ideas and needs, between Washington and Moscow? In Washington I was struck by the same thing that I see going on here; they are building offices, they are creating a number of new State regulation bodies, they are organising a long-needed civil service. Their need, like yours, is directive ability.

STALIN: The United States is pursuing a different aim from that which we are pursuing in the U.S.S.R. The aim which the Americans are pursuing arose out of the economic troubles, out of the economic crisis. The Americans want to rid themselves of the crisis on the basis of private capitalist activity without changing the economic basis. They are trying to reduce to a minimum the ruin, the losses caused by the existing economic system. Here, however, as you know, in place of the old destroyed economic basis, an entirely different, a new economic basis has been created. Even if the Americans you mention partly achieve their aim, i.e., reduce these losses to a minimum, they will not destroy the roots of the anarchy which is inherent in the existing capitalist system. They are preserving the economic system which must inevitably lead, and cannot but lead, to anarchy in production. Thus, at best, it will be a matter, not of the reorganisation of society, not of abolishing the old social system which gives rise to anarchy and crises, but of restricting certain of its bad features, restricting certain of its excesses. Subjectively, perhaps, these Americans think they are reorganising society; objectively, however, they are preserving the present basis of society. That is why, objectively, there will be no reorganisation of society.

Nor will there be planned economy. What is planned economy; what are some of its attributes? Planned economy tries to abolish unemployment. Let us suppose it is possible, while preserving the capitalist system, to reduce unemployment to a certain minimum. But surely, no capitalists would ever agree to the complete abolition of unemployment, to the abolition of the reserve army of unemployed, the purpose of which is to bring pressure on the labour market, to ensure a supply of cheap labour. Here you have one of the rents in the "planned economy" of bourgeois society. Futhermore, planned economy pre-supposes increased output in those branches of industry which produce goods that the masses of the people need particularly. But you know that the expansion of production under capitalism takes place for entirely different motives, that capital flows into those branches of economy in which the rate of profit is highest. You will never compel a capitalist to incur loss to himself and agree to a lower rate of profit for the sake of satisfying the needs of the people. Without getting rid of the capitalists, without abolishing the principle of private property in the means of production, it is impossible to create planned economy.

WELLS: I agree with much of what you have said. But I would like to stress the point that if a country as a whole adopts the principle of planned economy, if the Government, gradually, step by step, begins consistently to apply this principle, the financial oligarchy will at last be abolished, and Socialism, in the Anglo-Saxon meaning of the word, will be brought about. The effect of the ideas of Roosevelt's "new deal" is most powerful, and in my opinion they are socialist ideas. It seems to me that instead of stressing the antagonism between the two worlds, we should, in the present circumstances, strive to establish a common tongue for all the constructive forces.

STALIN: In speaking of the impossibility of realising the principles of planned economy while preserving the economic basis of capitalism, I do not in the least desire to belittle the outstanding personal qualities of Roosevelt, his initiative, courage and determination. Undoubtedly Roosevelt stands out as one of the strongest figures among all the captains of the contemporary capitalist world. That is why I would like once again to emphasise the point that my conviction that planned economy is impossible under the conditions of capitalism does not mean that I have any doubts about the personal abilities, talent and courage of President Roosevelt. But if the circumstances are unfavourable, the most talented captain cannot reach the goal you refer to. Theoretically of course, the possibility of marching gradually, step by step, under the conditions of capitalism, towards the goal which you call Socialism in the Anglo-Saxon meaning of the word, is not precluded. But what will this "Socialism" be? At best, bridling to some extent the most unbridled of individual representatives of capitalist profit, some increase in the application of the principle of regulation in national economy. That is all very well. But as soon as Roosevelt, or any other captain in the contemporary bourgeois world, proceeds to undertake something serious against the foundation of capitalism, he will inevitably suffer utter defeat. The banks, the industries, the large enterprises, the large farms are not in Roosevelt's hands. All these are private property. The railroads, the mercantile fleet, all these belong to private owners. And, finally, the army of skilled workers, the engineers, the technicians, these too are not at Roosevelt's command, they are at the command of the private owners; they all work for

the private owners. We must not forget the functions of the State in the bourgeois world. The State is an institution that organises the defence of the country, organises the maintenance of "order"; it is an apparatus for collecting taxes. The capitalist State does not deal much with economy in the strict sense of the word; the latter is not in the hands of the State. On the contrary, the State is in the hands of capitalist economy. That is why I fear that, in spite of all his energy and abilities, Roosevelt will not achieve the goal you mention, if indeed that is his goal. Perhaps, in the course of several generations it will be possible to approach this goal somewhat; but I personally think that even this is not very probable.

WELLS: Perhaps I believe more strongly in the economic interpretation of politics than you do. Huge forces striving for better organisation, for the better functioning of the community, that is, for Socialism, have been brought into action by invention and modern science. Organisation, and the regulation of individual action, have become mechanical necessities, irrespective of social theories. If we begin with the State control of the banks and then follow with the control of the heavy industries, of industry in general, of commerce, etc., such an all-embracing control will be equivalent to the State ownership of all branches of national economy. This will be the process of socialisation. Socialism and individualism are not opposites like black and white. There are many intermediate stages between them. There is individualism that borders on brigandage, and there is discipline and organisation that are the equivalent of Socialism. The introduction of planned economy depends, to a large degree, upon the organisers of economy, upon the skilled technical intelligentsia who, step by step, can be converted to the socialist principles of organisation. And this is the most important thing. Because organisation comes before Socialism. It is the more important fact. Without organisation the socialist idea is a mere idea.

STALIN: There is not, nor should there be, an irreconcilable contrast between the individual and the collective, between the interests of the individual person and the interests of the collective. There should be no such contrast, because collectivism, Socialism, does not deny, but combines individual interests with the interests of the collective. Socialism cannot abstract itself from individual interests. Socialist society alone can most fully satisfy these personal interests. More than that; socialist society alone can firmly safeguard the interests of the individual. In this sense there is no irreconcilable contrast between "individualism" and Socialism. But can we deny the contrast between classes, between the propertied class, the capitalist class, and the toiling class, the proletarian class? On the one hand we have the propertied class which owns the banks, the factories, the mines, transport, the plantations in colonies. These people see nothing but their own interests, their striving after profits. They do not submit to the will of the collective; they strive to subordinate every collective to their will. On the other hand, we have the class of the poor, the exploited class, which owns neither factories nor works, nor banks, which is compelled to live by selling its labour power to the capitalists and which lacks the opportunity to satisfy its most elementary requirements. How can such opposite interests and strivings be reconciled? As far as I know, Roosevelt has not succeeded in finding the path of conciliation between these interests. And it is impossible, as experience has shown. Incidentally, you know the situation in the United States better than I do, as I have never been there and I watch American affairs mainly from literature. But I have some experience in fighting for Socialism, and this experience tells me that if Roosevelt makes a real attempt to satisfy the interests of the proletarian class at the expense of the capitalist class, the latter will put another President in his place. The capitalists will say: Presidents come and Presidents go, but we go on for ever; if this or that President does not protect our interests, we shall find another. What can the President oppose to the will of the capitalist class?

WELLS: I object to this simplified classification of mankind into poor and rich. Of course, there is a category of people which strives only for profit. But are not these people regarded as nuisances in the West just as much as here? Are there not plenty of people in the West, for whom profit is not an end, who own a certain amount of wealth, who want to invest and obtain an income from this investment, but who do not regard this as their main object? They regard investment as an inconvenient necessity. Are there not plenty of capable and devoted engineers, organisers of economy, whose activities are stimulated by something other than profit? In my opinion there is a numerous class of capable people who admit that the present system is unsatisfactory and who are destined to play a great role in future capitalist society. During the past few years I have been much engaged in, and have thought of the need for conducting, propaganda in favour of Socialism and cosmopolitanism among wide circles of engineers, airmen, military-technical people, etc. It is useless approaching these circles with two-track class-war propaganda. These people understand the condition of the world. They understand that it is a bloody muddle, but they regard your simple class-war antagonism as nonsense.

STALIN: You object to the simplified classification of mankind into poor and rich. Of course there is a middle stratum; there is the technical intelligentsia that you have mentioned and among which there are very good and very honest people. Among them there are also dishonest and wicked people, there are all sorts of people among them. But first of all mankind is divided into rich and poor, into property owners and exploited; and to abstract oneself from this fundamental division and from the antagonism between poor and rich means abstracting oneself from the fundamental fact. I do not deny the existence of intermediate, middle, strata which either take the side of one or other of these two conflicting classes, or else take up a neutral or semi-neutral position in this struggle. But, I repeat, to abstract oneself from this fundamental division in society and from the fundamental struggle between the two main classes means ignoring facts. This struggle is going on and will continue. The outcome of the struggle will be determined by the proletarian class, the working class.

WELLS: But are there not many people who are not poor, but who work and work productively?

STALIN: Of course, there are small landowners, artisans, small traders; but it is not these people who decide the fate of a country, but the toiling masses, who produce all the things society requires.

WELLS: But there are very different kinds of capitalists. There are capitalists who only think about profits, about getting rich; but there are also those who are prepared to make sacrifices. Take old Morgan, for example. He only thought about profit; he was a parasite on society, simply; he merely accumulated wealth. But take Rockefeller. He is a brilliant organiser; he has set an example of how to organise the delivery of oil that is worthy of emulation. Or take Ford. Of course Ford is selfish. But is he not a passionate organiser of rationalised production from whom you take lessons? I would like to emphasise the fact that recently an important change in opinion towards the U.S.S.R. has taken place in English-speaking countries. The reason for this, first of all, is the position of Japan, and the events in Germany. But there are other reasons besides those arising from international politics. There is a more profound reason, namely, the recognition by many people of the fact that the system based on private profit is breaking down. In these circumstances, it seems to me, we must not bring to the forefront the antagonism between the two worlds, but should strive to combine all the constructive movements, all the constructive forces in one line as much as possible. It seems to me that I am more to the Left than you, Mr. Stalin; I think the old system is nearer to its end than you think.

STALIN: In speaking of the capitalists who strive only for profit, only to get rich, I do not want to say that these are the most worthless people capable of nothing else. Many of them undoubtedly possess great organising talent, which I do not

dream of denying. We Soviet people learn a great deal from the capitalists. And Morgan, whom you characterise so unfavourably, was undoubtedly a good, capable organiser. But if you mean people who are prepared to reconstruct the world, of course you will not be able to find them in the ranks of those who faithfully serve the cause of profit. We and they stand at opposite poles. You mentioned Ford. Of course, he is a capable organiser of production. But don't you know his attitude towards the working class? Don't you know how many workers he throws on the street? The capitalist is riveted to profit, and no power on earth can tear him away from it. Capitalism will be abolished not by "organisers" of production, not by the technical intelligentsia, but by the working class, because the aforementioned strata do not play an independent role. The engineer, the organiser of production, does not work as he would like to, but as he is ordered, in such a way as to serve the interests of his employers. There are exceptions of course; there are people in this stratum who have awakened from the intoxication of capitalism. The technical intelligentsia can, under certain conditions, perform miracles and greatly benefit mankind. But it can also cause great harm. We Soviet people have not a little experience of the technical intelligentsia. After the October Revolution, a certain section of the technical intelligentsia refused to take part in the work of constructing the new society; they opposed this work of construction and sabotaged it. We did all we possibly could to bring the technical intelligentsia into this work of construction; we tried this way and that. Not a little time passed before our trained intelligentsia agreed actively to assist the new system. To-day the best section of this technical intelligentsia are in the front ranks of the builders of socialist society. Having this experience, we are far from under-estimating the good and the bad sides of the technical intelligentsia, and we know that on the one hand it can do harm, and on the other hand it can perform "miracles." Of course, things would be different if it were possible, at one stroke, spiritually to tear the technical intelligentsia away from the capitalist world. But that is Utopia. Are there many of the technical intelligentsia who would dare break away from the bourgeois world and set to work to reconstruct society? Do you think there are many people of this kind, say, in England or in France? No, there are few who would be willing to break away from their employers and begin reconstructing the world.

Besides, can we lose sight of the fact that in order to transform the world it is necessary to have *political power*? It seems to me, Mr. Wells, that you greatly under-estimate the question of political power, that it entirely drops out of your conception. What can those, even with the best intentions in the world, do if they are unable to raise the question of seizing power, and do not possess power? At best they can help the class which takes power, but they cannot change the world themselves. This can only be done by a great class which will take the place of the capitalist class and become the sovereign master as the latter was before. This class is the working class. Of course, the assistance of the technical intelligentsia must be accepted; and the latter, in turn, must be assisted. But it must not be thought that the technical intelligentsia can play an independent historical role. The transformation of the world is a great, complicated and painful process. For this great task a great class is required. Big ships go on long voyages.

WELLS: Yes, but for long voyages a captain and a navigator are required.

STALIN: That is true, but what is first required for a long voyage is a big ship. What is a navigator without a ship? An idle man.

WELLS: The big ship is humanity, not a class.

STALIN: You, Mr. Wells, evidently start out with the assumption that all men are good. I, however, do not forget that there are many wicked men. I do not believe in the goodness of the bourgeoisie.

A PAMPHLET OF THE MOMENT!

# The Sedition Bill Explained

by W. Ivor Jennings, M.A., LL.D., Barrister-at-law

## With a Preface by J. B. Priestley

NOW READY — SIXPENCE — EVERYWHERE

In a few days the Incitement to Disaffection Bill, commonly known as the "Sedition Bill," is expected to reach its final stages in the House of Commons. In explaining to the ordinary man its serious implications and dangers, Mr. Ivor Jennings amply justifies the great and growing protest against the Bill and, as Mr. Priestley says of the author in his Preface to the Pamphlet: "Unlike many legal men, he has the gift of lucid exposition, and he makes full use of it in these pages. I propose to leave him alone with the Bill, because I cannot improve upon what he has said, which represents all that can be reasonably demanded on this subject. Therefore, I shall content myself with making a few comments on the wider issue."

Mr. Priestley goes on to say: "A man could be a Tory and could detest Pacifism and yet whole-heartedly join in this protest. Indeed, an Englishman with a deep respect for tradition ought to oppose this Sedition Bill simply because it runs counter to our English tradition. . . . If we allow this ugly tangle of searching and spying and denouncing to be forced upon us, we slip back hundreds of years. . . . Something is at stake here bigger than the immediate issues. . . . So it seems to me that we have a mission. That mission is to preserve both the spirit and forms of a liberal democracy, to persevere in the belief that men can be trusted with reasonably free speech, to show the world that the machine gun is not the beginning and end of political action. . . . Now the men who are trying to put through this Bill, with its thoroughly un-English powers of arbitrary police action, would be the first to call themselves patriots. . . . I cannot understand why, for England's sake, they want to be so un-English. If this Sedition Bill becomes law, then this island is smaller and less important than it was before. The men who wish to make it law are traitors to the real spirit of the country; they are busy reducing the stature of their countrymen. That a government calling itself a National Government should attempt such a fundamentally anti-national piece of legislation is a savage piece of irony."

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WELLS: I remember the situation with regard to the technical intelligentsia several decades ago. At that time the technical intelligentsia was numerically small, but there was much to do and every engineer, technical and intellectual, found his opportunity. That is why the technical intelligentsia was the least revolutionary class. Now, however, there is a superabundance of technical intellectuals, and their mentality has changed very sharply. The skilled man, who would formerly never listen to revolutionary talk, is now greatly interested in it. Recently I was dining with the Royal Society, our great English scientific society. The President's speech was a speech for social planning and scientific control. To-day, the man at the head of the Royal Society holds revolutionary views, and insists on the scientific reorganisation of human society. Your class-war propaganda has not kept pace with these facts. Mentality changes.

STALIN: Yes, I know this, and it is to be explained by the fact that capitalist society is now in a *cul de sac*. The capitalists are seeking, but cannot find, a way out of this *cul de sac* that would be compatible with the dignity of this class, compatible with the interests of this class. They could, to some extent, crawl out of the crisis on their hands and knees, but they cannot find an exit that would enable them to walk out of it with head raised high, a way out that would not fundamentally disturb the interests of capitalism. This, of course, is realised by wide circles of the technical intelligentsia. A large section of it is beginning to realise the community of its interests with those of the class which is capable of pointing the way out of the *cul de sac*.

WELLS: You of all people know something about revolutions, Mr. Stalin, from the practical side. Do the masses ever rise? Is it not an established truth that all revolutions are made by a minority?

STALIN: To bring about a revolution a leading revolutionary minority is required; but the most talented, devoted and energetic minority would be helpless if it did not rely upon the at least passive support of millions.

WELLS: At least passive? Perhaps subconscious?

STALIN: Partly also the semi-instinctive and semi-conscious, but without the support of millions, the best minority is impotent.

WELLS: I watch Communist propaganda in the West and it seems to me that in modern conditions this propaganda sounds very old-fashioned, because it is insurrectionary propaganda. Propaganda in favour of the violent overthrow of the social system was all very well when it was directed against tyranny. But under modern conditions, when the system is collapsing anyhow, stress should be laid on efficiency, on competence, on productiveness, and not on insurrection. It seems to me that the insurrectionary note is obsolete. The Communist propaganda in the West is a nuisance to constructive-minded people.

STALIN: Of course the old system is breaking down, decaying. That is true. But it is also true that new efforts are being made by other methods, by every means, to protect, to save this dying system. You draw a wrong conclusion from a correct postulate. You rightly state that the old world is breaking down. But you are wrong in thinking that it is breaking down of its own accord. No, the substitution of one social system for another is a complicated and long revolutionary process. It is not simply a spontaneous process, but a struggle; it is a process connected with the clash of classes. Capitalism is decaying, but it must not be compared simply with a tree which has decayed to such an extent that it must fall to the ground of its own accord. No; revolution, the substitution of one social system for another, has always been a struggle, a painful and a cruel struggle, a life and death struggle. And every time the people of the new world came into power they had to defend themselves against the attempts of the old world to restore the old order by force; these people of the new world always had to be on the alert, always had to be ready to repel the attacks of the old world upon the new system.

Yes, you are right when you say that the old social system is breaking down; but it is not breaking down of its own accord. Take Fascism for example. Fascism is a reactionary force which is trying to preserve the old world by means of violence. What will you do with the Fascists? Argue with them? Try to convince them? But this will have no effect upon them at all. Communists do not in the least idealise methods of violence. But they, the Communists, do not want to be taken by surprise, they cannot count on the old world voluntarily departing from the stage, they see that the old system is violently defending itself, and that is why the Communists say to the working class: Answer violence with violence; do all you can to prevent the old dying order from crushing you, do not permit it to put manacles on your hands, on the hands with which you will overthrow the old system. As you see, the Communists regard the substitution of one social system for another, not simply as a spontaneous and peaceful process, but as a complicated, long and violent process. Communists cannot ignore facts.

WELLS: But look at what is now going on in the capitalist world. The collapse is not a simple one, it is an outbreak of reactionary violence which is degenerating into gangsterism. And it seems to me that when it comes to a conflict with reactionary and unintelligent violence, Socialists can appeal to the law, and instead of regarding the police as the enemy they should support them in the fight against the reactionaries. I think that it is useless operating with the methods of the old rigid insurrectionary Socialism.

STALIN: The Communists base themselves on rich historical experience which teaches that obsolete classes do not voluntarily abandon the stage of history. Recall the history of England in the seventeenth century. Did not many say that the old social system had decayed? But did it not, nevertheless, require a Cromwell to crush it by force?

WELLS: Cromwell operated on the basis of the constitution and in the name of constitutional order.

STALIN: In the name of the constitution he resorted to violence, beheaded the king, dispersed Parliament, arrested some and beheaded others!

Or take an example from our history. Was it not clear for a long time that the Tsarist system was decaying, was breaking down? But how much blood had to be shed in order to overthrow it?

And what about the October Revolution? Were there not plenty of people who knew that we alone, the Bolsheviks, were indicating the only correct way out? Was it not clear that Russian capitalism had decayed? But you know how great was the resistance, how much blood had to be shed in order to defend the October Revolution from all its enemies, internal and external.

Or take France at the end of the eighteenth century. Long before 1789 it was clear to many how rotten the royal power, the feudal system, was. But a popular insurrection, a clash of classes was not, could not be, avoided. Why? Because the classes which must abandon the stage of history are the last to become convinced that their role is ended. It is impossible to convince them of this. They think that the fissures in the decaying edifice of the old order can be mended, that the tottering edifice of the old order can be repaired and saved. That is why dying classes take to arms and resort to every means to save their existence as a ruling class.

WELLS: But were there not a few lawyers at the head of the great French Revolution?

STALIN: I do not deny the role of the intelligentsia in revolutionary movements. Was the great French Revolution a lawyers' revolution and not a popular revolution, which achieved victory by rousing vast masses of the people against feudalism and championed the interests of the Third Estate? And did the lawyers among the leaders of the great French Revolution act in accordance with the laws of the old order? Did they not introduce new, bourgeois-revolutionary law?

The rich experience of history teaches that up to now not a single class has voluntarily made way for another class. There is no such precedent in world history. The Communists

have learned this lesson of history. Communists would welcome the voluntary departure of the bourgeoisie. But such a turn of affairs is improbable, that is what experience teaches. That is why the Communists want to be prepared for the worst and call upon the working class to be vigilant, to be prepared for battle. Who wants a captain who lulls the vigilance of his army, a captain who does not understand that the enemy will not surrender, that he must be crushed? To be such a captain means deceiving, betraying the working class. That is why I think that what seems to you to be old-fashioned is in fact a measure of revolutionary expediency for the working class.

WELLS: I do not deny that force has to be used, but I think the forms of the struggle should fit as closely as possible to the opportunities presented by the existing laws, which must be defended against reactionary attacks. There is no need to disorganise the old system, because it is disorganising itself enough as it is. That is why it seems to me insurrection against the old order, against the law, is obsolete, old-fashioned. Incidentally, I deliberately exaggerate in order to bring the truth out more clearly. I can formulate my point of view in the following way: first, I am for order; second, I attack the present system in so far as it cannot assure order; third, I think that class war propaganda may detach from Socialism just those educated people whom Socialism needs.

STALIN: In order to achieve a great object, an important social object, there must be a main force, a bulwark, a revolutionary class. Next it is necessary to organise the assistance of an auxiliary force for this main force; in this case this auxiliary force is the party, to which the best forces of the intelligentsia belong. Just now you spoke about "educated people." But what educated people did you have in mind? Were there not plenty of educated people on the side of the old order in England in the seventeenth century, in France at the end of the eighteenth century, and in Russia in the epoch of the October Revolution? The old order had in its service many highly educated people who defended the old order, who opposed the new order. Education is a weapon the effect of which is determined by the hands which wield it, by who is to be struck down. Of course, the proletariat, Socialism, needs highly educated people. Clearly, simpletons cannot help the proletariat to fight for Socialism, to build a new society. I do not under-estimate the role of the intelligentsia; on the contrary, I emphasise it. The question is, however, which intelligentsia are we discussing? Because there are different kinds of intelligentsia.

WELLS: There can be no revolution without a radical change in the educational system. It is sufficient to quote two examples—the example of the German Republic, which did not touch the old educational system, and therefore never became a republic; and the example of the British Labour Party, which lacks the determination to insist on a radical change in the educational system.

STALIN: That is a correct observation.

Permit me now to reply to your three points. First, the main thing for the revolution is the existence of a social bulwark. This bulwark of the revolution is the working class.

Second, an auxiliary force is required, that which the Communists call a party. To the party belong the intelligent workers and those elements of the technical intelligentsia which are closely connected with the working class. The intelligentsia can be strong only if it combines with the working class. If it opposes the working class it becomes a cipher.

Third, political power is required as a lever for change. The new political power creates the new laws, the new order, which is revolutionary order.

I do not stand for any kind of order. I stand for order that corresponds to the interests of the working class. If, however, any of the laws of the old order can be utilised in the interests of the struggle for the new order, the old laws should be utilised. I cannot object to your postulate that the present system should be attacked in so far as it does not ensure the necessary order for the people.

And finally, you are wrong if you think that the Communists are enamoured of violence. They would be very pleased to drop violent methods if the ruling class agreed to give way to the working class. But the experience of history speaks against such an assumption.

WELLS: There was a case in the history of England, however, of a class voluntarily handing over power to another class. In the period between 1830 and 1870, the aristocracy, whose influence was still very considerable at the end of the eighteenth century, voluntarily, without a severe struggle, surrendered power to the bourgeoisie, which served as a sentimental support of the monarchy. Subsequently, this transference of power led to the establishment of the rule of the financial oligarchy.

STALIN: But you have imperceptibly passed from questions of revolution to questions of reform. This is not the same thing. Don't you think that the Chartist movement played a great role in the reforms in England in the nineteenth century?

WELLS: The Chartists did little and disappeared without leaving a trace.

STALIN: I do not agree with you. The Chartists, and the strike movement which they organised, played a great role; they compelled the ruling classes to make a number of concessions in regard to the franchise, in regard to abolishing the so-called "rotten boroughs," and in regard to some of the points of the "Charter." Chartism played a not unimportant historical role and compelled a section of the ruling classes to make certain concessions, reforms, in order to avert great shocks. Generally speaking, it must be said that of all the ruling classes, the ruling classes of England, both the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, proved to be the cleverest, most flexible from the point of view of their class interests, from the point of view of maintaining their power. Take an example, say, from modern history—the general strike in England in 1926. The first thing any other bourgeoisie would have done in the face of such an event, when the General Council of Trade Unions called for a strike, would have been to arrest the Trade Union leaders. The British bourgeoisie did not do that, and it acted cleverly from the point of view of its own interests. I cannot conceive of such a flexible strategy being employed by the bourgeoisie of the United States, Germany or France. In order to maintain their rule, the ruling classes of Great Britain have never foresworn small concessions, reforms. But it would be a mistake to think that these reforms were revolutionary.

WELLS: You have a higher opinion of the ruling classes of my country than I have. But is there a great difference between a small revolution and a great reform? Is not a reform a small revolution?

STALIN: Owing to pressure from below, the pressure of the masses, the bourgeoisie may sometimes concede certain partial reforms while remaining on the basis of the existing social-economic system. Acting in this way, it calculates that these concessions are necessary in order to preserve its class rule. This is the essence of reform. Revolution, however, means the transference of power from one class to another. That is why it is impossible to describe any reform as revolution. That is why we cannot count on the change of social systems taking place as an imperceptible transition from one system to another by means of reforms, by the ruling class making concessions.

WELLS: I am very grateful to you for this talk, which has meant a great deal to me. In explaining things to me you probably called to mind how you had to explain the fundamentals of Socialism in the illegal circles before the revolution. At the present time there are in the world only two persons to whose opinion, to whose every word, millions are listening—you and Roosevelt. Others may preach as much as they like; what they say will never be printed or heeded. I cannot yet appreciate what has been done in your country; I only arrived yesterday. But I have already seen the happy faces of healthy men and women and I know that something very considerable is being done here. The contrast with 1920 is astounding.